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A
TREATISE
OF
OATHS,
Containing
Several Weighty Reasons why the People
call'd *QUAKERS* refuse to *SWEAR* :
And those Confirmed by
Numerous Testimonies out of *Gentiles, Jews* and
CHRISTIANS, both *Fathers, Doctors* and *Martyrs*.
Presented to the
King and Great Council of England,
Assembled in
PARLIAMENT.

Mat. 5. 34. But I say unto you, Swear not at all.

Jain. 5. 22. Above all things, my Brethren, Swear not.

Jer. 32. 10. Because of Oaths the Land Mourneth.

Theognis, He ought to Swear neither this thing nor any thing.

Maimonides, It is a great Good for a Man not to Swear at all.

Chrysostom, It is not lawful to Swear, neither in a just nor unjust Cause.

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By W^m Gann & Richard Richardson

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P4121

1/29/21

TO THE
King and Great Council
OF
ENGLAND,

Assembled in

PARLIAMENT.

The Case of the People call'd QUAKERS relating to OATHS further Represented; and Recommended to their Consideration, in order to a Speedy and Effectual REDRESS.

THe common Benefit of the Free People of England being undoubtedly both the first and greatest Reason for the Ancient, Just & Necessary Constitution of Parliaments; and being also inform'd that it is your Resolution, to employ this Session to the Redress of Publick Grievances: And since We cannot but repute our selves

(3)
*selves a Member of this Great Body you
represent, by Birth and English Descent;
and are not only involved in the Common
Calamities of the Kingdom, but in Par-
ticular very cruelly Treated in our Per-
sons and Estates, because we cannot for
pure Conscience take any Oath at all
(though we have again and again tender'd
our solemn Yea or Nay; and are most
willing to sustain the same Penalty in
Case of Lying, that is usually inflicted for
Perjury) To t^e End we may not be
interpreted to decline t^e Custom out of
meer Humour or Evasion (though our
frequent & heavy Sufferings by Fin
and tedious Imprisonments, sometimes
Death it self, should sufficiently Vindic
us against any such Incharitable Cens^r
WE do, with all due Respect, present, as
with our Reasons for that Tenderness, and
many Testimonies and Pr^ovidents in their
De-*

Defence; and we entreat you, to express that Care of a Member of your own Civil Body, which Nature and Christianity excite to; *We mean*, That it would please you to consider how deeply we have already suffered, in Person and Estate, the Inconveniencies we have daily to encounter, and those Injurious not only to our selves, but others we commerce with, in that both they and we, because of our Tenderness in this Matter, are constantly at the Mercy of such as will Swear any thing to advantage themselves, where they are sure that a Contrary Evidence shall be by Law esteem'd (*however True*) Invalid; under which Difficulty several of us at this Hour fruitlessly labour: *That being sensible of our Calamity, you may please to endeavour, as for others, so for this Grievance, both a Speedy and Effectual Redress; otherwise, besides*
ordi-

(4)
ordinary Cases, wherein many of us extraordinarily suffer, we may perhaps prove in this of Oaths the Greatest, if not the Only Sufferers of the Kingdom; a Cruelty, we hope, you do not design against us.

God Almighty, we beseech him with all Sincerity of Heart, incline you to *Justice, Mercy and Truth*, Amen.

*London, the 25th of }
the 3d Moneth, 1675. }*

Subscribed on the behalf of the rest of our Friends by -

Alexander Parker,
George Whitehead,
Stephen Crisp,
William Mead,
Gerrard Roberts,
William Welsh,

Samuel Newton,
Thomas Heart,
John Osgood,
James Claypool,
Thomas Rudyard,
Richard Richardson,

William Penn.

*A Catalogue of the Authors, Testimonies and
Presidents cited in Favour of this Treatise.*

A Schylus,	p. 31.
Albertus Magnus,	p. 10, 115.
Albingenses,	p. 100, 121.
W. C. Albrid.	p. 12.
Alexander de Ales,	p. 115.
Alexander ab Alexandro,	p. 18.
Alexid,	p. 34.
Alphonfus de Avendano;	p. 134.
Ambrosius,	p. 10, 68, 135.
Ambrosius Ansbertus,	p. 112.
Anabaptists,	p. 100, 101.
Antiochus Palest.	p. 109.
Anselmus Cantuar.	p. 120.
Tho. Aquinas,	p. 115, 132.
Aristophanes,	p. 102.
Aristoteles,	p. 18.
Achanasius,	p. 50, 54.
Augustinus,	p. 10, 95, 132, 133.
M. Aurelius Antoninus,	p. 36.
Aufonius,	p. 36.
B	
Bagnol,	pag. 100.
Baptista Folengius,	p. 115.
Baronius,	p. 100, 121.
Basil. Magnus,	p. 10, 60, 100.
Basilides,	p. 41.
J. Becher,	p. 124.
	Beda,

Beqa;
 Counc. Berghamsted,
 Bernard,
 Beza,
 Bible folio, printed 1578.
 Bible 4to. printed 1559.
 Biblioth vet. patr.
 Blandina,
 Blastaris,
 Brugenfis,
 Otho Brunfelsius,
 Beat Bruno,
 Wal. Brute,
 J. Burrel,

p. 110, 141.
 p. 111.
 p. 100, 113, 115 137, 144.
 p. 102, 141.
 p. 144.
 143.
 p. 116.
 p. 41, 45.
 p. 62, 111.
 p. 10, 115.
 p. 114.
 p. 46.
 p. 123.
 p. 126.

C

Cajetan,
 Casarius,
 Joac. Camerar.
 Gui. Carmelite,
 Cassiodorus,
 Castro,
 Caten. 65. Græc. Patr.
 Cathari,
 Hug. Cardinal.
 Pet. Charron,
 Geoff. Chaucer,
 Cheril,
 Chromatius,
 Cheyftom, p. 10, 11, 17, 50, 70, 100, 112, 126, 141.
 Cicero,
 Clemens Alexandr.
 Clemens Roman.
 J. Clements,

p. 133, 135.
 p. 67.
 p. 143.
 p. 100.
 p. 46, 108.
 p. 100, 141.
 p. 108.
 p. 100.
 p. 115.
 p. 144.
 p. 122.
 p. 33.
 10, 104.
 p. 18, 33.
 p. 15, 43, 47.
 p. 58, 101, 142.
 p. 124.
 Clineas,

Clinias,	p. 31, 62.
Qu. Curtius,	p. 29.
Cyprian,	p. 51.
Cyril,	p. 107.

D

J. Damascen.	pag. 107.
Diodorus Siculus,	p. 28.
Diogenes Laert.	p. 33.
Druthmarus,	p. 114, 141.

E

Archiep. Ebur. Egbert,	p. 111.
J. Edward,	p. 124.
Epictetus,	p. 34.
Epiphanius,	p. 50, 67.
Erasmus,	p. 128.
Esseni,	p. 37.
Eusebius,	p. 40, 41, 99.
Evagrius Scholast.	p. 104, 107.

F

Jacob Faber,	p. 138.
Festus ad Lapidem,	p. 18.
J. Fox Martyrol.	pag. 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 128.

G

Bp. Gauden,	p. 10, 14, 30, 154.
Gentian Herver.	p. 48.
Gennadius,	p. 99.
Gloss. Ordin.	p. 107, 115.
Hug. Grotius,	p. 31, 34, 37, 150.

H

J. M. Hadingtonian.	p. 143.
Haimo,	p. 112.
Hercules,	p. 29.
Hesiod,	p. 29.

R. Herbert,	p. 124.
Hierocles,	p. 31.
Hilary,	p. 50, 57
Hilary Syracus.	p. 100.
Huetius,	p. 50.
Humiliati,	p. 100.
J. Hufs,	p. 126.

I

James on the Fathers,	pag. 78.
Janfenius,	p. 100, 114.
Jerom,	p. 11, 92, 127, 136, 141, 143.
Jews Antiquities,	p. 154.
Josephus,	p. 37, 136.
Justin Martyr,	p. 41.
Irenæus,	p. 97.
Isidorus Pelusiot.	p. 104.
Isodor. Hispalens.	p. 109.
Isocrates,	p. 32.

K

Hist. ref. Kirk Scotland,	p. 127.
---------------------------	---------

L

Lactantius,	p. 43.
Laetius Hermip.	p. 30.
Libanius,	p. 30.
Lindenbrogius,	p. 18.
Lodovicus Pius,	p. 148.
Lollards,	pag. 127.
Lorharius,	p. 148.
Ludolphus,	p. 10, 115,
Luitprandus,	p. 158.
N. Lyra,	p. 106, 115.
Lyfander,	p. 32.
	M.

M

Maimonides,	pag. 37.
Menander,	p. 33.
Maldonat,	p. 101. 144.
Manichees,	p. 100.
Marlorat,	p. 144.
Fra. de Mendoca,	p. 136.
Archiep. Mentz.	p. 111.
S. Morland,	p. 128.

N

Grave of Nassou,	p. 160, 161.
G. Nazianzen,	pag. 42. 64.
Nicodemus's Gospel,	p. 59
Nilus,	p. 107.
G. Nyssen,	p. 63. 141.

O

Oecumenius,	pag. 119.
Olympiodorus,	p. 108.
Prince of Orange,	p. 162.
Origen,	p. 30, 49, 100, 101.
Orthodoxographa:	p. 59.

P

Paschatius Ratbertus,	p. 113.
Patrini,	pag. 100.
Pelagians,	p. 100, 101
Persians,	p. 28.
Philo Judæus,	p. 36, 38, 138, 146.
Plato,	p. 32.
Plinius,	p. 18.
Plowman's Complaint,	p. 121.
Plutarch,	p. 29, 32, 35.
Polybius,	p. 10, 81.
	P :

Polycarpus,	p. 40, 45.
Ponticus,	p. 41, 45.
Potamiena,	p. 42.
Jer. of Prague,	p. 126.
Prateolus,	p. 100.
Le Prieur,	p. 45.
Protestants of Piedmont,	p. 128.
Publicani,	p. 100.
J. Purrey,	p. 124.
Pythagoras,	p. 30, 31.

Q

Quintilian,	p. 34
-------------	-------

R

Rabanus,	p. 107, 115.
Raimundus,	pag. 37.
Reiner.	p. 120.
Remigius,	p. 115.
Rhadamanthus,	p. 32.
Rigaltius,	p. 46.
Raffinus,	p. 115.
Rupertus,	p. 115.

S

Mich. Sadler,	pag. 127.
Ger. Sagarel,	p. 128.
Græ. Sages,	p. 30.
Rob. Sanderson,	p. 20, 101, 104.
W. Sawtree,	p. 126.
Scapula,	p. 102.
Seulterus,	p. 43, 46.
Scythians,	p. 29.
Simocat.	p. 34.
Smaragdus,	p. 115
	So-

Sociad.	P. 30.
Socrat. Schol.	pag. 51, 60, 63, 71.
Solon,	P. 30.
Lod. Soto Major,	P. 144.
H. Spelman,	P. 111.
Sportwood,	P. 127.
Stobæus,	P. 30, 34.
Swarez,	P. 47, 58, 100, 140.
W. Swinderby,	P. 122.
Jer. Taylor,	pag. 155.
Tertullian,	P. 42, 52, 100.
Gr. Thaumaturgus,	P. 51.
Theodoret,	P. 11. 106.
Theognis,	P. 30.
Theophylact,	P. 100, 113, 141.
W. Thorp,	P. 124, 126.
Titelmannus,	P. 10.
Treatise of Peace,	P. 163.
Archiep. Triers,	P. 111.

V

Valerius Max.	P. 30, 33.
Villerius,	P. 143.
Vossius,	P. 100.
J. Ulher,	P. 100, 121, 128, 152.

W

Walden,	P. 100.
Waldenses,	P. 100, 120.
Sp. Walton,	P. 102.
W. White,	P. 126.
J. Wickliff,	P. 121.
Wickliffists,	P. 101.
Widford,	P. 100.
Em. Willy,	P. 124.

X

	X	
Xenocrates,		p. 33, 15.
Xenophon,		p. 102.
	Y	
Eliz. Young,		p. 125.
	Z	
Euthymius Zagabonus,		p. 126.

THE

Some Inducements Offer'd

TO

Answer this REQUEST,

From a Consideration of the

Cause and End of an Oath,

And those

REASONS

AND

TESTIMONIES,

Given by us against the USE and
IMPOSITION of it.

The GROUND or Reason of Swearing.

THis (we think) all will agree to have been the
Degeneration of Man from primitive Integrity, at what time *Yes* and *No* were enough; for when men grew corrupt, they distrust'd each other, and had recourse to extraordinary Ways to awe one another into Truth's-speaking, as a Remedy against Falseness;

ness; else, what need had there been of an Oath, or any Extraordinary Way of Evidence, when every Syllable was freighted with Truth and Integrity? It had been a meer taking of God's Holy Name in vain: Truth then flowed naturally, and wanted no such Expedient to Extort its Evidence.

- * Lived before Chr. 200. years. Thus, * Polybius, though an Heathen, in his Story of the Romans, saith, Among the Ancients Oaths were seldom used in Judicatures themselves; but when Perfidiousness increased, Oaths increased, or then the Use of them first came in.
- H. Grotius on Mar. 5. Basilus Magnus saith, Oaths are an Effect of Sin.
- Bp. Gauden of Oaths, p. 36. Gregorius Nazianzenus in his Dialogue against Swearing, saith, An Oath is nothing else but a certain consummation of Mischiefs.
- in Psalm 14. Ambrosius saith, Swearing is only in Condescension to a Defect.
- Jamb. 20. Chrysostom saith, An Oath came in when Evils increased, when men appeared unfaithful, when all things became Topsy Turvy. Again,
- Comment. on Hebr. c 6. To swear is of the Devil, seeing Christ saith, What is more (then Yea, &c.) is of Evil.
- Rom. 9. on Acts 3. Swearing took its Beginning for want of Truth or Punctuality.
- Hom. Psal. 5. Augustin saith, An Oath is not among good, but Evil Things, and used for the Infirmary of others which is Evil, from which we pray that we may be daily delivered.
- Ad Pop. Antioch. Chromatius saith, What need we swear, seeing it is unlawful to Lye. Which shows that Lying was the Occasion of Oaths, and by leaving off Lying, Oaths vanquish as unprofitable.
- on Mar. 5. Titelmannus saith, that an Oath belongs not to Virtue.
- on Mar. 9. Albertus Magnus saith, Swearing is by Indulgence.
- on Psal. 14. Ludolphus saith, An Oath was permitted of Infirmary.
- on Mar. 5. Vit. Chr. p. 2. s. 12. Burgenfis cites Jerome saying, Our Saviour teacheth that an Oath sprung from the Vices of Men.
- on Mar. 5. Bp. Gauden also tells us, That the Evils of mens
- p. 17. and 23. Heavens

Hearts and Manners, the Jealousies and Distrusts, the Dissimulations and Frauds of many Christians, their Uncharitableness and Insecurities are such, as by their Diseases do make solemn Oaths and judicial Swearing necessary, not ABSOLUTELY MORALLY or PRECEPTIVELY; but as a Remedy or Expedient.

Jerom (with many of the Fathers, *Chrysostom*, *Theo.* on *Mat.* 5. 33, 37. *doret*, and others here omitted, because largely cited hereafter) make this the Reason why God indulged the Jews in the Use of Swearing, *That they were but in the State of Infancy, and that they might be kept from Swearing by false Gods; which the Scripture is plain in: For thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and swear by HIS Name; Ye shall not go after other Gods, for God is a Jealous God, &c.* Which shews, that he dispensed with Swearing by his Name, that he might take them off from Swearing by False God's, because they would thereby acknowledge them, and not the True God; so that Swearing is only better then Idolatry.

*Deutr. 6. 13.
14, 15.*

It will remain that we give our REASONS why we cannot take this Liberty, and Swear, as well as other Men have done, and yet do.

I. **T**He first is drawn from the Cause and Ground of Oaths, viz. *Perfidiousness, Distrust and Falshood*: God's Injunctions to avoid those hateful Crimes; The Ability he hath given man to answer his Commands; and Man's Duty to make that use of God's Gift: For if Swearing came in by Perfidiousness, Distrust, Dissimulation and Falshood, it is a most just Consequence that it ought to go out with them; or that as the Rise and Increasing of those Evils were the Rise and Increasing of Oaths; so the Decreasing and Extirpation of those Evils

should be the Decreasing and Abolishing of Oaths ; otherwise there would be no Truth in the Rule of Contraries, nor Reason in that ancient *Maxim*, *Cessante ratione Legis cessat lex* ; *That the Ceasing of the Reason of the Law is the Cessation of the Law* : Expedients are no longer useful then to obtain what they are designed to. Means are swallowed up of their Ends ; Diseased Men only want Remedies, and Lame Men Crutches ; Honesty needs neither Whip nor Spur, She is Security for herself ; and Men of Virtue will speak Truth without Extortings ; for Oaths are a sort of Racks to the Mind, altogether useless where Integrity swayes.

This we presume no man of Reason will deny, viz. That *Swearing came in, and ought to go out with Perfidiousness* ; and we hope it will be as easie to grant, at least it will be very easie to prove, That God hath frequently, both by Prophets and Apostles, reprov'd men for such Impieties, and strictly required Truth and Righteousness ; as, *Isa.* 59, 3, 4. *Jer.* 9. 3, 5. *Rom.* 12. 19. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. *Col.* 3. 8, 9, 10. *Josb.* 24. 14. *1 Sam.* 12. 24. *1 King.* 2. 4. *Eph.* 4. 25. and by abundance of other Places in Holy Scripture. And that God should enjoyn man any thing that he hath not empowered him to perform, is unworthy of any man acknowledging a God, so much as to conceive. It is true, that the unprofitable Servant in the Parable is represented to entertain so blasphemous a Thought of his Maker, that he was so hard a Master, as to reap where he did not sow ; but the same Parable also acquaints us of the dreadful Consequence of that Presumption : The Prophet *Micah* preached another Doctrine, *The Lord hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good : and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justly, to love Mercy, and to walk Humbly with thy God ?* For this End hath the Grace of God appeared unto all Men, as speaks the Apostle *Paul* to *Titus*, that they should be taught to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, which entering & over-running the World, made

made way among other Expedients for that of *Oaths*; so that to live that Life which needs *No Oath*, man is both requir'd and impower'd: And as it is only his Fault and Condemnation, if he doth not; so certainly there can be no Obligation upon him who liveth that Life of Truth and Integrity to perpetuate that which rose, and therefore ought to fall with Falshood and Perfidiousness: the *Reason* of the thing it self excuses him; for, he that fears Untruth, needs not swear, because *he will not lye*, to prevent which men exact Swearing: And he that doth not fear telling Untruth, what is his Oath worth? He that makes no Conscience of that Law that forbids Lying, will he make any Conscience of Forswearing? Veracity is the best Security; and Truth speaking the Noblest Tye and Firmest Testimony that can be given. This we declare to you to be both our Judgment and Attainment; We speak not Boastingly, but with Humility before the Great Lord of Heaven and Earth, to whose alone Power we do unanimously ascribe the Honour: He hath taught us to speak the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, as plainly and readily without an Oath as with an Oath, and to abhor Lying as much as Perjury; so that for us to swear, were to take his Holy Name in vain: Nor are we therein singular; for that not only *Christian Fathers, Mar-* and *Doctors*, but also *Jews* and *Heathens* have had this Sense of the Rise and Use of Oaths, as will hereafter fully appear.

II. Our *second Reason*, why we refuse to comply with this Custom, and our Superiours ought not to impose it, is this, *It would Gratifie Distrusts, Humor Jealousies, and Subject Truth, and those that love it, to the same Checks, Curbs and Preventions that have been invented against Fraud*; whereby the Honour of a Nobler Profession, the Power of a veracious Example, and the just Difference that ought to be made betwixt Trustiness and Diffidence, Integrity and Perfidiousness, are utterly lost.
How.

How is it possible for men to recover that ancient Confidence that good men reposed in one another, if some don't lead the Way, and hold forth to the World a Principle and Conversation beyond the Necessity of such extraordinary Expedients? At present People lie all in a Heap; and the Greatest Truth finds no more Favour then the greatest Fraud; Fidelity must wear the Shackles worldly Prudence hath made against the Evil Consequences of Couzennage, and subject her self to the Customs brought up through Fraud, or go to Gaol. Be pleased to consider, that Trustiness did not all at once quit the World, nor will it return universally in the Twinkle of an Eye; Things must be allowed their Time for Rise, Progress and Perfection: And if ever you would see the World planted with Primitive Simplicity and Faithfulness, rather cherish then make men Sufferers for Refusing to Swear, especially if they offer the same Caution to the Law with him that will swear. We dare not Swear because we dare not Lye, and that it may appear to the World, that we can speak the Truth upon easier Terms then an Oath: For us then to be forc'd to swear, is to make us do a needless thing, or to suspect our own Honesty. The first we dare not, because, as we have said, it is to take God's Name in vain; and we have no Reason to distrust our selves, being no wayes conscious of fraudulent Purposes: Why then should we swear? But much rather, why should we be imposed upon? It is a Saying ascribed to Solon, That a good man should have that Repute as not to need an Oath; that it is a Diminution to his Credit to be put to Swear. It becomes not an Evangelical Man to Swear, was a primitive Axiom; but more of that anon: In the mean while please to remember, you have a Practice among you, to exempt your Lords in several Cases, placing the Value of an Oath in their bare Avouchment upon their Honour, supposing that men of those Titles should have so much Worth, as that their Word might be of equal Force with a Common Man's Oath:

Bish. Gaud. of
Oaks, p. 41.

Oath: And if you will please to understand *Honour* in the Sense of the most ancient and best of Philosophers, to wit, *VIRTUE*, your own Custom gives Authority to our Reason, & makes you to say with us, *That Virtue needs not Swear, much less have Oaths imposed upon her, to tell Truth*, the only Use of Oaths. It was Evangelically spoken of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, That a Good Life is a firm Oath; which was memorably verified by the Judges of *Athens*, who, though *Heathens*, forbade the Tendering of *Xenocrates* an Oath, because of their great Opinion of his Integrity, which was Three Hundred Years before Christ came in the Flesh.

III. Our third Reason for Non conformity to your Custom is, the Fear we have, lest by Complying we should be guilty of Rebellion against the Discoveries God hath made to our Souls of his ancient holy Way of Truth; & consequently of concealing his Goodness to us, and depriving him of that Glory & the World of that Advantage this honest Testimony may bring to him & them. He has redeem'd us from Fraud; 'Tis he only that hath begotten this Conscientiousness in us; and we dare not put this Light under a Bushel, neither can we deny his Work, or him to have the Honour of it. We intreat you, take this Tenderness of ours into Christian Consideration.

IV. Oaths have in great measure lost of the Reason of their primitive Institution, since they have not that Awful Influence which was and only can be a Pretence for using them; on the contrary, they are become the familiar parts of Discourse, and help to make up a great share of the *A la mode* Conversation: and those who decline their Company, or reprove their Practice, are to go for a sort of *Nice and squeamish Conscienc'd Men*. These Swear without Fear or Wit, yet would be thought Witty in Swearing, Fearless they can't: Some are curious in their Impiety; Old Oaths are too dull for men of their Invention, who almost shift

Oaths

Oaths with their Fashions: Nay, the most judicial *Oaths* are commonly administred and taken with so little *Reverence and Devotion* (to say nothing of the *Perjuries*, that through Ignorance or Design, are too frequently committed) that we can't but cry out, *Oh the great Depravity that is in the World!* How low is *Man* fallen from the primitive Rule of Life? Well may the Prophet's Complaint be ours, for, *If ever Land mourned because of OATHS*, with great Sadness we say it, *this doth*. And what more effectual Remedy can any People propose against the notorious Abuse and evil Consequence of *Swearing*, then *Truth-speaking*? for those that dare not *Lye*, need not *Swear*; and they that make no Conscience of *Lying*, do not much fear an *Oath*, at least their Consciences are very crazy in taking it. This only Reason, were we destitute of all other Allegations, would be a strong Dissuasive from *Swearing*; for we hold God's Honour, and our Profession greatly concern'd to prove to so False an Age, that there is a People who are so far from vain and false *Swearing*, that they dare not swear the *Truth*; but whose *Yea* and *Nay* shall weigh against other mens *Oaths*, and that with a free Offer of sustaining double Punishment in case of Miscarriage. Expedients may last a while, but *TRUTH* only shall have the Honour of conquering *Falshood*, and *Virtue* will and must be greater than an *OATH*.

V. The Omnipresency of God rightly understood, shows the Usefulness of an *Oath*, and is with us a good Argument against *Swearing*; for what need is there of that Man's being aw'd into true Evidence by such sort of Attestations and Imprecations as make up the common Form of *Oaths*, who knows God to be always present to reside and preside in his Soul, according to that New and Everlasting Covenant which he hath made; that his People should be his Temple, that he would dwell *IN* them; and walk *IN* them. Did the Children of men know the Power, Glory and Majesty of God, WHOM the Apostle preacht *NIGH* to the *Athe-*

nians, and declared to the *Ephesians* to be *Father of all*, *Ephes. 4. 6.*
above all, through all and IN THEM ALL, there would
 be *no Oaths*, and but *few Words*, and those utter'd with
 Reverence and Truth.

VI. We do not find that *Oaths* answer this part of the
 End for which they are impos'd, viz. *To convince those for
 whose sakes they are taken, of the Weight and Truth of a
 Man's Testimony by Force of God's Witness joyn'd there-
 with* : For they don't behold God's concurring Witness by
 such an Assistance or Avenge of that Party, as the Truth or
 Falshood of his Testimony deserveth ; for the Judgments
 of God are secret, and rarely so publickly seen to Men, per-
 haps once in an Age, that he should give any memorable
 Discovery of his good Will or Displeasure in such a Case ;
 but whenever he doth it, it is not at Man's Appointment :
 And it is an evident Sign that God approveth not of that
 sort of Invocation, because he doth not answer them that
 invoke him, according to their Wish ; as neither did he in
 the old Law or Custom of *Combating* appear on his side
 that had the better Title or Cause, as he promised in the
 Law of *Jealousie*, that their Thigh should rot, and their Bel-
 ly swell, &c.

Numb. 5. 21,
 22.

VII. We look upon it to be no less then a presumptuous
Tempting of God, To summon him as a Witness, not only to
 our Terrene, but trivial Busineses ; such as we should
 doubtless account it an high Indignity alwaies to solicit an
 Earthly Prince to give his Attendance about. What !
 Make God, the Great God of Heaven and Earth our Cau-
 tion in worldly Controversies, as if we would bind him to
 obtain our own Ends ? It is to make too bold with him,
 and to carry an undue Distance in our Minds towards him
 that made us ; An Irreverence we can by no means away
 with, and upon which *Chrysostom* is most sharp, as will be
 seen anon. Besides it is vain and insolent to think that a man
 when he pleaseth, can make the Great God of Heaven a

C

Witness

Witness or a Judge in any matter to appear by some signal Approbation or Judgment, to help or forsake him, as the Truth or Falseness of his *Oath* requires, when he saith, *So help me God.*

VIII. Besides what we have hitherto urged in Defence of our selves against the Substance of the *Oath*, we justly except against the *Form* of it (which further adds to its Unlawfulness, and consequently to our Vindication) as by the Contents and kissing of the Book; Swearing by a Sign, being Heathenish or Jewish. For the Romans held a Stone, and said, *If I deceive willingly then let Diespiter cast me out of my Goods, as I this Stone:* The Heroes swore by lifting up of the Scepter: Caesar swore by his Head, his House, that is, consecrated them to the Wrath of God, if he willingly deceived, &c. The manner of the Jews is from Gen. 14. 22. that Abraham lift up his hand to God, *ON, If, &c.* putting the Hand under the Thigh, on the Head; passing betwixt Beasts divided, as God did to Abraham, &c. see more in Lapid. Sophoc. in Antiq. v. 270. Scolia. Bapt. Hansen of passing through Fire, swearing by the right Hand, &c.

The Use of *So help me God*, we find from the Law of the Almans, of King Cletharius: The laying on of three Fingers above the Book is to signify the Trinity; the Thumb and the little Finger under the Book, are to signify the Damnation of Body and Soul, if they forswear, *So help me God.*

Further be pleased to consider that the English Custom has very much overgone English Law in this Business of Oaths; they were anciently but solemn Attestations, *As the Lord liveth, &c.* which are now improv'd to Imprecations, *So help me God and the Contents of this Book:* Though it was so of old at Combat; but that concerns not our Case. For the Kissing of the Book, that is also Novil: Indeed after they rise from solemn Attestations to Imprecations, the Law required a Sight and Touch of the Book; The Saxon Jurors were *Sacratenentes*; In the first Norman Times it was *Sacris tactis*; and in later Writs, *Evangelis tactis*; nay,

Fest. ad Lapid.

Polib. l. 3 c. 25.

Alex. ab Alex.

l. 5. gen. dier. 10.

Cic. l. 5. Ep. 1.

Arist. 3 Pol. 10.

Plin. in pan. ad.

Trojan. c. 64.

London. v. c. 3.
sect. 7.

may, the *Priest's Hand* was on his *Breast* (in *Matthew Paris*) not upon the *Book*. However *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Superstition* and *Ceremony*, have made up the present *Form* of *Oaths*, which the true *Christian-man* neither wants, nor we conceive, ought to perform; much less impose where *Tenderness* by sober *Consciences* is pleaded, and equal *Caution* offer'd to the *Law* for the *Integrity* of *Yea* and *Nay*.

IX. But were we also destitute of this *Plea*, and the usual *Oaths* of our *Country* the most inoffensively form'd, and best penn'd that ever any were, we have both the *Example* and *Precept* of our *Lord* and *Saviour*, *Jesus Christ*, to oppose to any such *Practice*; for in all that *History* delivered to us by the four *Evangelists*, we never read him to have used any further *Affirmation* than what in *English* amounts to *Verely*, *Verely*, or *Truly*, *Truly*, *I say unto you*: Thus by his *Example* exciting us the more readily to obey his express *Prohibition* of *Swearing*, *Mat. 5. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37.* which runs thus, *Again, Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oathes; but I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL; neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne; nor by the Earth, for it is his Footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy Head, because thou canst not make one Hair white or black; but let your Word be YEA, YEA; NAY, NAY; for whatsoever is MORE than THESE cometh OF EVIL.*

He here prohibits even the *lesser Oaths*, as They thought them that revered *Swearing* by the *Name* of the *Lord*, which in old time he suffer'd by reason of the *Falseness* of their *Hearts*, and great *Proneness* to *Idols*; even as *Moses* permitted them to put away their *Wives*, which in the precedent Verse also is disallowed by *Christ*, though with the *Exception* of *Fornication*; but *Swearing* without any *Exception*: He doth not say, *Swear not except before a*

Magistrate (though he says, Put not away thy Wife, except for the Cause of Fornication) but **SWEAR NOT AT ALL**: why? because it is OF EVIL; which reason reaches the Oaths taken before *Magistrates*, as well as other Oaths; for Distrust & Unfaithfulness are the Cause of one as well as the other: And there is equal Reason in that respect, that a Master should swear in private to his Servant at his Entrance, that he will pay him his Wages, as that the Servant should swear in publick to a *Magistrate*, that at his Departure his Master would not pay him his Wages; both which Oaths the Certainty of their Words, their *Yea* being *Yea*, and their *Nay* being *Nay*, makes vain and superfluous.

Bp. R. Sanderson
de Jur. Oblig.
p. 143.

Obj. We are not unsensible of the common *Objection* that is made against this Allegation of our Master's Command, That he only prohibited Vain Oaths in Communication: But if the words of the Text and Context be consider'd, every Oath will be proved Vain and Unlawful; for Christ's Prohibition was not a meer Repetition of what was forbidden under the Law, but what the Law allowed, as Bp. Sanderson well observeth; It was not needful that Christ should forbid what was forbidden in it self, or was alwayes Unlawful, which vain Swearing was and is by the third Commandment, Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; therefore Christ exceeded the Prohibition of the Law: And the whole Chapter is a Demonstration of a more excellent Righteousness then that which either needed or used Oaths; for Christ brings Adultery from the Act to the Thought; in lieu of Revenge he commands Suffering, and extends Charity not only to Friends, but Enemies; so in the Place controverted, in the room of such Oaths & Vows as ought to be perform'd unto the Lord, he introduces *Yea* and *Nay*, with a most absolute **SWEAR NOT AT ALL**. This was the Advance he made in his excellent Sermon upon the Mount; he wound up things to an higher pitch of Sanctity then under the Law, or the childish State of the Jews could receive. Again, saith he, Ye have heard of old time

time, thou shalt not Forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths; but I say unto you, **SWEAR NOT AT ALL**; as plain, general and emphatical a Prohibition as can be found in Holy Scripture. However, those Persons that usually advocate for the Continuance of Oaths under the Gospel, tell us, it is not a general Prohibition, but is limited to Swearing by Creatures, either by Heaven, Earth, Jerusalem or Head, &c. VWhich is wholly inconsistent with the Scope of the Place, as we shall make appear from these Four Considerations: 1st, The Prohibition reaches as well to serious as vain Oaths, such as men made, if they swore at all, and ought to make to God only; for, to him alone should they perform them, and are they accountable for them: These very allowed Oaths of Old Time, are the first prohibited by Jesus Christ; *It was said of Old, thou shalt not Forswear thyself; but I say, SWEAR NOT AT ALL.* 'Tis true, it is not particularized what Oaths they were to keep of old; but in general Terms, that they were not to Forswear themselves; and it is clear that God enjoined them that would Swear, that they should only Swear by his Name. Now what can be hence inferred more evidently, then that men ought not to swear those Oaths under the Gospel, which they might swear, and ought not to forswear, but to perform unto the Lord in the Law. 2^{dly}, Christ himself gives the Explanation of his own Words, Chap. 23. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. where he teacheth us, That he that swears by the Temple, swears by it, and by him that dwells therein; and he that shall swear by Heaven, swears by the Throne of God, and by him that sits thereon: So that he that swears by the Head, swears by him that made it: and he that swears by the Earth, swears by him that created it; which leaves no room for the Objection, for it is as if Christ should have said, *I not only command you not to Forswear, but perform, as it was said to them of old time; but I charge you, NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL*: I mean, not only that you should not swear by God, and those Oaths that the Pharisees account binding; but al-

so, that you should not so much as swear by those lesser Oaths, as they esteem them, and which they are wont to swear by; for they are not less nor more allowable, in that they that swear by them, swear by him that is the Author and Maker of them: wherefore being of the same Nature with the other, I forbid you to swear by them as well as by those Oaths that were of old time made, and ought not to be break, but perform'd unto the Lord; for this is one of my great Commandments, which they must keep that will be my Disciples, that is to say, **SWEAR NOT AT ALL.** Our 3^d Inducement to believe this to have been the Intention of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the concurrent *Testimony* of the Apostle James, which is not only a Repetition of his Master's Doctrine, but an *Addition and Illustration*, we hope sufficient to determine the present Question with every unprejudic'd Reader; *But above all things, my Brethren* (saith he) *swear not*; which runs parallel with *Swear not at all*: The Negative is as general & forcible. He proceeds, *neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth*; Words of equal Import with the latter part of Christ's Prohibition: and as if he had foreseen the Cavils of our Swearing Adversaries, he adds, *neither by any other Oath*; which though as clear as the Sun, if yet for their last shift they should tell us, that he only meant any other Oath of that kind, not that he prohibited Swearing by the Name of the Lord, it will not do their Business; for that Christ hath already assured us, *Whosoever swears by Heaven, swears by him that sits thereon*; and the very next words show that it was not his Design only to prohibit vain, but plainly to exclude all Swearing. *But let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest ye fall into Condemnation*; else why had he not said, *but you may swear by the Name of God before a Magistrate*? Why must *Neither by any other Oath* be added after such a plain Prohibition, as, *My Brethren, Above all things Swear not*? And why must *Yea and Nay* be substituted in the room of an Oath, if it was yet intended by the Apostle, that Christians might rise higher in their Evidence than a bare *Affirming or Denying*? that is, Though their *Yea* be never so truly *Yea*, and their *Nay* never

never so sincerely *Nay*, or the very Truth of the Matter be
 spoken, which is the Import of the Words; yet that *they*
ought to swear. What is this but to *contradict* the natural
 Tendency of the Command of Christ and his Apostles?
 which is plainly this; *If your Yea be Yea, it is enough; if*
your Nay be Nay, it is sufficient; for Christians ought not to
swear, if they do, they fall into Condemnation, in that they
 break their Master's Command, who hath told them, that
whatsoever is more then Yea or Nay, cometh of Evil, which
 is the Ground of all Oaths; for they ought to mean so
 simply and honestly in what they *say*, as that they should
 never need to *swear* in order to tell the Truth. Our 4th
 and last Consideration, and that which to us seemeth of
 great Moment to clear up our Lord and Saviour's sense,
 and rescue the Passage from the Violence of *Objectors*, is this
 Clause, *For whatsoever is MORE then Yea, Yea, and Nay,*
Nay, cometh of Evil. This cannot be intended of more
 Words then *Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay*, provided they are
 not of an higher Strain, but of the same Degree of Speech
 importing a plain Assertion or Denyal of a thing; for it is
 not the Number, but Nature of the Words spoken, that
 is here prohibited: Nor can it be only understood of *Per-*
jury; for every body knows that to be evil in it self, which
 is more then that which *cometh OF, or because of Evil*:
 Therefore it must be understood as well of *Swearing*, as of
Forswearing, which is not Evil it self, yet cometh *of, or by*
Reason of Evil in the World: Nor is there any thing more
 then *Yea and Nay* besides *Perjury*, which can be inten-
 ded, but an *Oath*; and therefore that was intended. Christ
 doth not only prohibit Evil it self, but that which is Evil by
 Superstuity to Evangelical Sincerity, and that *Swearing* is
 (be it of what sort it will) wherever *Yea* is *Yea*, and *Nay* is
Nay. In short, If what is *More then Yea and Nay, cometh*
of Evil; then because any *Swearing*, as well as *Forswearing*,
 is more then *Yea and Nay*; it follows, that any *Swearing*
cometh of Evil, and therefore ought to be rejected of *Chri-*
stians. Nor will our *English Translation* of *Nos* shelter
 our *Objectors*: For, *Communication* doth not exclude those
 many

many Cases that require Evidences among men, no nor any the least Action of Man's Life ; on the contrary, they have a great Place in Human *Communication*, which is comprehensive of the various Discourses and Transactions of a Man's Life, as 2 *Kings* 9. 11. 2 *Sam.* 3. 17. *Eph.* 4. 29. *Col.* 3. 8. 1 *Cor.* 15. 33. It is a word of the same Extent with *Conversation*, which takes in all that can happen between man and man in this World : Thus the Psalmist, *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright*, Psalm 50. 23. So the Apostle, *Let your Conversation be as becomes the Gospel*, Phil. 1. 27. Besides, *λογος* may be rendred *Word*, as in *Jeh.* 1. 1. and the *Italian* and *French* Translations have it, *Let your Word be Yea, Yea ; Nay, Nay ;* as much as if Christ had said, As I do not only condemn the Act for Adultery, which the Law did, but also the Conception of the Mind ; and not only Murder, but Revenge likewise ; so I do not only condemn *Forswearing*, which is done to my hand in the Law of God, but prohibit *Swearing at all* ; for I make that to be Unlawful, which the Law doth not call Unlawful : Therefore when your Evidence is called for, *Swear not at all*, but let your Word be *Yea, Yea*, and *Nay, Nay* ; that is, Do not speak Untruth ; for that is Evil : Don't Swear ; for that comes of Evil. To conclude ; People *swear* to the End they may *Speak Truth* ; Christ would have men *Speak Truth*, to the End they might *not swear* : he would not have his Followers upon such base Reserves, but their Word to carry the Weight of an Oath in it ; that as others ought not to be guilty of Perjury, *Christians* ought not to be guilty of Lying : For such is the Advance from *Moses* to *Christ*, *Jew* to *Christian*, that as the *Christian* needs not the *Jew's* Curb, so his Lye is greater then the *Jew's* Perjury, because his Yea or Nay ought to be of more Value then the other's Oath.

X. And lastly ; Besides these expresse Prohibitions, *Swearing* is forbidden by the very Nature of *Christianity*, and unworthy of him that is : *he Author of it*, who came not

not to implant so imperfect a Religion, as that which needed Oaths, or should leave Fraud, the Ground of Swearing, unextirpated; but to promulgate that Gospel which retrieves ancient Sincerity, builds up Waste Places, restores those Breaches Oaths entred at, and leads into the Ancient Holy Paths of Integrity they never trod in: He is that Powerful Lord, which cureth the Diseases of all them that come unto him, and Mystical Serpent exalted, that relieves all that believingly look up to him: His Office is to make an End of *Sm*, that made way for Swearing, and introduce that Everlasting Righteousness which never needs it; The Religion he taught, is no less then Regeneration and Perfection; such Veracity as hath not the least Wavering; Sincerity throughout, that it might not only exceed the Righteousness of the Swearing *Jews*, but that Law which permitted it till the Times of Restitution, which he brought to the Degenerated World, who said, *Swear not at all*; for the Law that permitted Oaths, was given by Moses; but Grace and Truth, that ends them, came by Jesus Christ, who therefore prohibits them. And not only is this Gospel of Christ, or the Holy Religion he taught, of so pure and excellent a Nature; but those who will be his Disciples, are obliged to obey it, inasmuch that he himself hath said, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments; and if ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love.* Again, *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me: For I say unto you, that except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no Case enter the Kingdom of Heaven: Be ye therefore Perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* These are the weighty Sayings of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and certainly, he who breaks not the least Commandment (forbidden *Verf. 19.*) who can Suffer rather then Revenge, love Enemies, and be perfect as his Heavenly Father is perfect, is above the Obligation of an Oath unto

Joh. 14. 15.

E 15. 10. 14.

Mat. 16. 24.

Mat 5. 20. 48.

Truth-speaking. His Disciples preacht not another Gospel then their Master's, who prayed, that those who believed might be sanctified **THROUGHOUT**, in Body, Soul and Spirit, which is a perfect Removal of the Ground of Swearing; and they were exhorted to press after the Mark of the Price of this High and Holy Calling, until they should all come unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ Jesus: *1 Theff. 5. 23.* For even hercunto (saith Peter) were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that ye should follow his Steps, who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth: And saith John, - As he is, so are we in this World. If No Guile be found in our Mouths, then No Oaths; for they came because of Guile: And if we ought to resemble him in this World, then must our Communication be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay; that is, we must live the Life of Truth, and speak the Words of Truth, which ought to be of greater Force then Oaths, that come of Evil. If the Righteousness of the Law ought to be fulfilled in us, we ought not to swear, because we ought to be so Righteous as not to Lye. This is Evangelical; for as he that conceives not a foul or revengeful Thought, need not to purge himself of Adultery and Murder: Neither is there any Reason, that man should purge himself of Lying by Swearing, that doth not so much as countenance an untrue Thought. The Language of the same Apostle to the Ephesians further explains this Evangelical Evidence, *Ephes. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.* But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, & have been taught by him, as the Truth is in Jesus; That ye put off concerning the former Conversation the Old Man, which is Corrupt, according to the Deceitful Lusts, & be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind, & that you put on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness: Wherefore **PUTTING AWAY LYING, SPEAK EVERY MAN TRUTH** with his Neighbour: Beyond which, there can be no Assurance given or desired. And if Christians ought never to Lye, it is most certain they need never to Swear; for Swearing

is built upon *Lying*; Take away *Lying*, and there remains no more Ground for *Swearing*; *Truth-speaking* comes in the room thereof: And this not only the *Christian-Doctrine* teaches and requires; but *Christ*, the blessed Author of it, is ready to *work in the Hearts of the Children of Men*, would they but come and learn of him, who is *Meeke, Lowly, filled with Grace and Truth*. And we must needs say, It is a shameful thing, and very Dishonourable to the Christian-Religion, that those who pretend themselves to be the Followers of *Christ*, for so true Christians ought to be, should so degenerate from his Example and Doctrine as to want and use scarceing Asseverations, dispenced with in some of the weakest Times of Knowledge, and such horrible Imprecations (never known to ancient *Jews* and *Christians*) to ascertain one another of their Faith and Truth: Religion must needs have suffered a great Ebb, and *Christianity* a fearful Ecclyps since those brighter Ages of its Profession: For *Bishop Gauden* himself, in his Discourse of *Oaths*, confesses, That the ancient Christians were so strict and exact, that there was no need of an Oath among them; yea, they so kept up the Sanctity and Credit of their Profession among Unbelievers, that it was Security enough in all Cases to say, *Christianus sum, I am a Christian*.

But to fortifie what we have hitherto urged in Defence of our Judgment and Practice; and to the End it may more fully appear, that our Tenderness in this great Case of *Oaths* comes not from any Sower, Sullen or Superstitious Humor, or that we would trouble the World with any New-fangled Opinion, we shall produce the concurrent Testimonies of several Famous and Good Men for above these Two Thousand Years, among *Gentiles, Jews* and *Christians*, enough to make an Oecumenical Council; We shall cite them out of the best Editions we have been able to procure, and as truly and punctually as we can render them, digested in Order of Time

Memorable TESTIMONIES

against Swearing, collected out of the Writings of Gentiles, Jews & Christians; some of which were deliver'd to the World several Ages before Swear not at all was writ by Matthew, or spoken by Christ; which makes Swearing, but especially Punishing for not Swearing, among Christians, so much the more Disallowable.

The Whole publisht not only in Favour of our Cause; but for the Instruction of the World, and to their Just Honour that said & writ them, as durable Monuments of their Virtue.

I. The Sayings of the Gentiles or Heathens, in Dislike of Oaths.

Our two first Testimonies shall be the Practice of two great People, the *Persians* and *Scythians*.

Diodorus Siculus, lib. 16.

These Nations were many Hundred Years bef. Christ.

I. 'Among the *Persians*, saith *Diodorus Siculus*, Giving the Right Hand was the Token of Truth-speaking: He that did deceitfully, was counted more Detestable then
'if

'if he had Sworn. Which plainly impliyes, that Swearing was Detested among them, as well as that they needed not to Swear, who so much used Truth-speaking.

Quint. Curt. in vit. Alex.

II. The *Scythians*, as it is reported by *Q. Curtius*, in their Conference with *Alexander*, upon Occasion of an expected Security, told him, *'Think not that the Scythians confirm their Friendship by Oath; They Swear by keeping their Word.* Which is not only a Proof of their Disuse of Common Oaths, but Swearing at all, even in Matters of greatest Importance.

Plutarch Rom. Quest. 28.

III. *'So Religious was Hercules*, saith *Plutarch*, *Liv'd before that he never swore but once.* If it was Religiously Christ about done to swear but once in a Man's Life, it had been more Religiously done not to swear at all. 1280. years; being in the dayes of Gedeon, Judg. 8. How just and severe a Censure is this out of an *Heathen's* Mouth upon the Practice of Dissolute *Christians*?

Hesiod Theogon. p. 88.

IV. *Hesiod* in his *Theogonia* places an Oath amongst the *Brood of Contention*; *'An Oath*, saith he, *greatly hurts men.* Again presently, *'An Oath goes with corrupt Judgments;* or an Oath flies away together with corrupt Judgments, that is, when Justice appears among men, Oaths vanish, as his Scope in that place shews.

Sociad.

Seciad. in *Stob.* 28.

Bef. Christ 620. years ; *Seven Sages*, so famous in *Greece*, ' That men ought in the dayes ' *not to Swear.*
of *Josiah.*

Stob. *Serm.* 3.

V I. *Solon*, the famous Law-giver of *Athens*, and one of those *Seven Sages*, exhorted the People to ' *observe Honesty more strictly then an Oath.* As if he had said, Honesty is to be preferred before Swearing, as another Saying of his imports, ' *A good Man (should have that Repute, as not to need an Oath ; it is a Diminution to his Credit to be put to Swear,* Bp. Gaud. of *Oaths*, p. 41.

Theognis ver. 660.

Bef. Christ 593. years. V I I. *Theognis*, the *Greek Poet*, writing of a Person Swearing, saith, ' *Neither ought he to swear this or any thing : This Thing or Swearing (it self) shall not be.* What is this less then, Swear not at all ?

Valer. Max. lib. 8. cap. 18. *Laert.* *Hermip.* & *Orig.*
contr. *Cels.*

Bef. Christ 590. years ; These Three Persons liv'd in the time of *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel.* V I I I. *Pythagoras*, a Grave and Virtuous Person, being earnestly intreated of the *Crotonian-Senators* for his Advice in things relating to the Government, did in his Oration, among other Excellent Sentences, with more then ordinary Emphasis, lay this down in the Nature of a Maxim,
' *Let*

‘ Let no man attest God by an Oath, though in Courts
 ‘ of Jurisdiction; but use to speak such things, as that he
 ‘ may be credited without an Oath.

H. Crot. on Mat. 5. 34.

I X. *Clinias*, a Just Greek, and Follower of *Pythagoras*, out of Love to Truth, and Respect he bore his Master’s Doctrine, that enjoined him to fear and shun an Oath, chose to pay Three Talents, which amount to about Three Hundred Pound, rather than he would take any Oath: Whose Example *Basilinus Magnus* upbraided the Christians of his Time with, that were then learning to Swear.

Bef. Christ
 560. years.

Hierocles Comment in *Carm. Pythag.* p. 28.

X. *Hierocles* testifies, ‘ That *Pythagoras*, in enjoying them to revere an Oath, not only prohibits Forswearing, but requires them also to abstain from Swearing.

Bef. Christ
 422. years;
 in the time
 of *Ahasuerus*, *Ezra* 4.

And *Ashilus* makes a sincere Beckon to a Matter a firm Oath.

Stobaeus Serm. 114.

XI. *Socrates*, that worthy Gentile, and great Promoter of Virtue among the Athenians, among many Excellent Sentences delivered this, ‘ That Good Men must let the World see, how that their Manners or Dealings are more firm than an Oath. Which both proves that he saw a more Excellent Righteousness than Swearing Truth it self, and believed it attainable; for he manifestly exhorts

Bef. Christ
 422. years;
 in the days
 of *Haggai* &
Zachariah.

Good

Good Men to that Integrity, which is a greater Caution then an Oath. He was put to Death for testifying against the *Heathen* Idols, acknowledging one only God.

Plut. in Lacon. Epoph.

Bef. Christ 400. years. XII. *Lysander*, the great Spartan Captain; thought an Oath of so little Value in comparison of Truth, that he bestowed this contemptuous Saying upon Swearing, '*Children are to be deceived with Toys, and Men with Oaths.* Implying, that Sincerity is a greater Security then an Oath.

Isocr. ad Demon.

Bef. Christ 394. years. XIII. *Isocrates*, a Greek Orator, in his Oration to *Demonicum*, advises, '*Not to take an Oath for Money Matters.* Also he teaches, '*That Good Men should shew themselves more credible then an Oath.* These two lived in the days of *Malachi*.

Plat. de Leg. 12.

Bef. Christ 266. years. XIV. *Plato* (call'd Divine) forbids Swearing in solemn Cases, '*That none swear himself; That none require an Oath of another.* He speaks there, how '*Rhadamanthus* brought in Swearing by the Gods; but that his Art therein was not agreeable to that Time (it seems he accounted it an Art of Policy) '*But that in all Actions or Causes, Laws which are made with Understanding, should take away Swearing from both Adversaries.*

‘versaries. For (saith he) it is an Horrible
 ‘Thing, that when many Judgments are done
 ‘in a City, well near half the People are forsworn
 ‘in them—Therefore let the Presidents of Judg-
 ‘ments *not permit any to swear in Actions, not even*
 ‘for Perswasions sake; but that he persevere in that
 ‘which is Just, with a fitting Speech, &c.

Valer. Max. 10. Cic. pro Corn. Balb. Diog. Laert.
in vit. Xenocr.

XV. *Xenocrates* was so renowned at *Athens*, Bef. Christ
 for his Virtuous Life and great Integrity, that 337. Years.
 being called to give his Evidence by Oath, *all the*
Judges stood up and forbad the Tender, because they
 would not have it thought, that Truth depen-
 ded more upon an Oath, then the Word of an
 Honest Man.

Menander.

XVI. *Menander*, the Greek Poet, saith, Bef. Christ
 ‘Flee an Oath, though thou shouldst swear justly. 336. Years.

Cherillus in *Perseid*.

XVII. *Cherillus* saith, ‘Oaths bring not
 ‘Credit to the Man, but the Man must bring Credit to
 ‘the Oaths. What serve they for then? to De-
 ‘ceive? It seems by this, that Credit is better
 than an Oath; for it is the Credit that is the Se-
 curity, not the Oath.

Stobaeus in Jur. c. 27.

XVIII. *Alexides in Olynth*, saith, 'A
'Wise Man ought alwayes to give Credit, not to Swea-
'rers, but to the Things themselves. Then Oaths
are vain; for it is not the meer Oath, but the
Likelihood of the Truth of the Evidence, from
the Consideration and Comparing of the Cir-
cumstances, that turns the Scale.

Simocat. Epist. 33. F.

XIX. *Simocatus*, 'Perfidiousness appears se-
'curer then Faithfulness; and an Oath imposed is a fit
'Engin for Deceit. Strange! that faithful Yea and
'Nay is stopt, when Perfidiousness with an Oath
'can pass all Guards, Courts and Offices. He
manifestly links Oaths and Perfidiousness, and
gives the Praise to Faithfulness.

H. Grot. on Mat. 5.

XX. *Epietetus*, a famous and grave Stoick,
counselled, 'to Refuse an Oath **ALTOGETHER**.

Quint. I. 8.

XXI. *Quintilian* saith, that 'in Time past
'it was a kind of Infamy for Grave and Approved
'Men to Swear, as if their Authority should suffice
'for Credit: Therefore the Priests or *Flamins*
'were not compelled to it; for then to compel a
'Noble Man to Swear, were like putting him upon the
'Rack, &c. Which shows an Oath to be an Un-
natural.

natural and Exporting Way of Evidence, and that they preferred Virtue and Truth before an Oath.

Plutarch Rom. quest. 44.

XXII. *Plutarch* in his 44th *Rom.* qu. upon the Custom of the *Romans*, holding it Unlawful for the *Flamen Dialis*, or Chief Priest, to Swear, puts the Question, 'Why is it not Lawful for Jupiter's Priest to Swear? Is it because an Oath ministr'd unto Freemen is as it were the Rack & Torture tendered unto them? For, certain it is, that the Soul, as well as the Body of the Priest ought to continue free, and not be forced by any Torture whatsoever; or for that it is not meet to Distrust or Discredit him in small Matters, who is believed in Great and Divine Things? or rather because every Oath endeth with Detestation and Malediction of Perjury? And considering that all Maledictions be odious and abominable, therefore it is not thought good, that any other Priests whatsoever should Curse, or pronounce any Malediction: And in this respect was the Priestess of *Minerva* in *Athens* highly commended, for that she would never curse *Alcibiades*, notwithstanding the People commanded her so to do; For I am (quoth she) ordained a Priestess to pray for Men, and not to curse them. Or last of all, was it, because the Peril of Perjury would reach in common to the whole Commonwealth, if a Wicked, Godless and

Forsworn Person should have the Charge and Superintendence of the Prayers, Vows and Sacrifices made in the behalf of the City? Thus far *Plutarch*, whose Morals have the Praise among all the Writings of *Philosophers*; who is also commended himself very highly for his Virtue and Wisdom. See his Life.

M. Aur. Ant. in Descript. bon. Vir.

XXIII. *M. Aurelius Antoninus*, that Philosophical Roman Emperor, in his Description of a Good Man, sayes, 'That the Integrity of a truly good man is such, that there is no need of an Oath for him. Certainly then he was far from imposing Oaths upon his People, who both by his Example and Precept prefer'd Integrity before an Oath.

Libanius.

XXIV. *Libanius*, a Greek Orator, though otherwise no Admirer of *Christians*, reckons this amongst the Praises of a *Christian* Emperor; 'He is (sayes he) so far from being blackt with Perjury, that he is even afraid to swear the Truth. It seems then, they swore not in his time; and that *Libanius*, an Enemy to *Christians*, prefer'd and admired Swear not at all.

Auson. Epist. 2.

XXV. We shall conclude with *Ausonius*, whose Saying seems to be all contracted, or those other Testimonies digested into

ONE

(37)

one Axiom, that is, *'To swear or speak falsely, is one and the same thing.*

These are the Reflections upon *Oaths* we receive from *Heathens*, who by the Light they had, both discerned the Scope of the Evangelical Doctrine, *Swear not at all*, preceptively laid down by Christ our Lord, *Mat. 5. 34.* and prest it earnestly: And which is more to their Honour, but to the *Christians* Shame, several of them lived it sincerely.

II. Testimonies from the *Jews* in Dislike of all Swearing.

H. Grot. Com. on Mat. 5. 34.

XXV I. *Maimonides*, out of the most ancient of the *Jewish Rabbies* extracts this memorable Axiom, *'IT IS BEST FOR A MAN NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL.*

Raimund. p. 135.

XXV II. *Raimundus* quotes him thus, *'Maimonides* in tract. de juramentis; *IT IS A great Good, NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL; The ancient and lawful Doctrine of the Synagogue.* If it be a great Good, what is it to impose an Oath?

Joseph. de bello Judaico l. 2. c. 7.

XXV III. *'The Esseni or Essians* (saith *Josephus*) *'keep their Promise, and account every Word; they speak of more force then if they had bound it with an Oath; and they shun Oaths worse then Perjury.*

‘for they esteem him condemned for a Liar, who is not
‘believed without calling God to witness.

‘These *Essaens* were the most Religious of the
‘*Jewish* Pepole, though the *Pharisees* made the
‘greatest Noise amongst the Rabble.

Philo de decalogo, p. 583.

XXIX. *Philo*, that excellent *Jew*, relates
thus much concerning the same *Essaens*, ‘That what
‘soever they said, was firmer then an Oath; And that to
‘Swear was counted amongst them a thing superfluous.

Philo Judæus on Com. 3d.

XXX. The same *Philo* himself thus
taught in his Treatise on the Ten Command-
ments; Commandment 3d. Thou shalt not take
the Name of God in vain: ‘Many Wayes (saith
he) ‘do men sin against this Commandment; so
‘THAT IT IS BETTER NOT TO SWEAR
‘AT ALL; but so well accustom thy self to speak Truth
‘alwaies, that thy Bare Word shall have the Force and
‘Virtue of an Oath. It is become a Proverb, That to
‘swear well and holily is a second Voyage; for he that
‘swareth is suspected of Lying and Perjury. It is, saith
‘he, most profitable and agreeable to the reasonable Na-
‘ture, to abstain ALTOGETHER from Swearing.
‘Whatsoever a godly Man speaks, let it go for an Oath.

The Wisdom and Moderation of this worthy Per-
sonage reflects just Blame upon those that Pillage their
Neighbours, because they Conscientiously Refuse an
Oath: But that men, who pretend to be the Disciples of
Jesus Christ, should commit these Cruelties, aggravates
their

their Evils, and doubt less their Guilt. How can they ever hope to look their Lord with Comfort in the Face, who so severely Treat their Fellow-Servants ? Certainly *Jews* and *Heathens* will one Day rise up in Judgment against such *Christians*, for their Unnatural Carriage towards their Brethren : This is not to Love Enemies, but injure Friends. *Jews* and *Heathens* are become Names of Reproach ; yet to the Rebuke of *Christians*, as they call themselves, they not only discern'd the Rise and Ground of Oaths, but the Evil of using them, even while they were tolerated ; and both avoided them, and exhorted others to that Integrity which had no need of them.

These Testimonies, though they are of Weight with us, and we hope they will have a due Impress upon the Minds of many of our Readers ; yet because nothing produced out of *Jews* and *Centiles*, may advance our Cause with some, or render it ever the more acceptable, We shall next betake our selves to the more *Christian* Ages of the World, for Approbation of our Judgment, who we are sure will kindly entertain us, their Liberality being Extraordinary to our Cause ; and from whom we shall never want *Votes* for **SWEAR NOT AT ALL**, while their Works are in the World : May our *Superiors* joyn theirs with them, and we have Reason to believe, that our Deliverance from the Yoak of Oaths will be the happy Issue of this necessary Address.

Testimonies

III. Testimonies from *Christians*, both *Fathers*, *Doctors* and *Martyrs*, in Dislike of *All-Swearing*.

Polycarpus.

XXXI. The first Testimony recorded against Swearing, after the Apostles Times, was that of *Polycarpus*, who had lived with the Apostles, and was said to have been Disciple to *John*, not the least of the Apostles; for at his Death, when the Governour bid him swear, *Defie Christ*, &c. he said, 'Fourscore and Six Years have I served him, yet hath he never offended me in any thing. The Proconsul still urged and said, Swear by the Fortune of Cæsar; to whom *Polycarpus* answered, 'If thou requirest this Vain-glory, that I Protest the Fortune of Cæsar, as thou sayest, feigning thou knowest not who I am, hear freely, I AM A CHRISTIAN. This Good man began his Fourscore and Six Years, which was about Twenty Years after *James* wrote *Above all things, my Brethren, Swear Not*; and several years before *John* the Apostle deceased; for he is called his Disciple. See his History and Commendation in *Eusebius*.

Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. 4. cap. 15.

We know it is objected by some, That he refused to Swear only because he could not swear by that Oath, which is a Guess, and no Confutation of what we alledge: But if that had been *Polycarpus's* Reason, why did he not rather say, The Law of God forbids Swearing by Idols?

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'Tis certain, the first *Christians* would not Swear, but thought *Polycarpus's* Answer Security enough to them that demanded their Oath: He refused all Oaths as a *Christian*; therefore saying, he was a *Christian*, was Reason sufficient why he would not take that Oath.

Justin Martyr, Apol. 2. pro *Christianis*, ad *Anton. Pann.*
oper. p. 63.

XXXII. It was some time before his Suffering that *Justin Martyr*, who is the first we find writing of it, publisht an *Apology* for the *Christians* in the year 150. as himself saith, and a second after that, wherein he tells us, after the Doctrine of his Master, 'That we should NOT SWEAR AT ALL, but alwayes speak the Truth. He, that is, Christ, hath thus commanded, SWEAR NOT AT ALL; but let your YEA be YEA, and your NAY, NAY; and what is more then these is of Evil. See his Praise and Martyrdom in *Eusebius*, soon after *Polycarpus*. *Euseb. lib. 4. cap. 16.*

Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. 5. c. 1.

XXXIII. 'Under the same Emperor (says *Eusebius*) 'suffered also *Ponticus*, of Fifteen Years of Age, and *Blandina*, a Virgin, with all kind of Bitter Torments; the Tormentors now and then urging them to Swear, which they constantly Refused.

Euseb. ibid. lib. 6. cap. 4.

XXXIV. And in the next Emperor's Reign, *Basiliides*, a Souldier of Authority amongst
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the Hoast, being appointed to lead *Potamiens* to Execution, and by her convinced of the Truth in Christ, was after a while required to Swear; But he affirmed plainly, *'It was not lawful for him to Swear; for (said he) I am a Christian.* He did not lay the Unlawfulness upon that Oath, but upon Swearing at all. The History only sayes, His Companions would have him swear upon some occasion or other, not mentioning by what; His Answer was, *It is Unlawful for me to Swear; and why? because, saith he, I am a Christian:* The Consequence is plain, *Christians* took no Oaths; therefore not their Oaths.

Tert. Apol. pro Christianis advers. gent. cap. 32.

Tertullian XXXV. In the same Emperor's Reign lived
was a Law- Tertullian, a strict and learned Man, who wrote
yer, Son to a a very notable *Apology* for the *Christians*, wherein
Centurion of he answers the Objection of the *Heathen*, who
Pro-consular accused them of not being Well-wishers to the
Dignity. See Emperor, nor *Caesar's* Friends, in that they refused
his Life. to Sacrifice and Swear by the *Genius, Fortune*
 and *Health* of the *Emperor* (we begin with this
 because it is urged by some against us) saith he,
'We do Swear, as not by the Genius of the Caesars,
'so by or for their Safety, which is more August than
'all Geniuses or Petty Gods; for we reverently look up
'unto the Judgment of God in the Emperors, who hath
'set them over the Nations, and we know that to be
'in them which God wills, and what God wills, that we
'will to be safe (that God save it) Hoc salvum
 esse

'esse volumus, et pro magno id juramento habemus; i. *And that we account for a great Oath, or that we have instead of a great Oath; namely, our Well-wishing to Cæsar: the thing that was desired, the Substance of the Oath; that Oath which the Pythagoreans said was in all reasonable Creatures, viz. a full Resolution of Mind not to transgress the Law of God, which Tertullian saith here they had Respect to; That Oath which a Just Man sweareth by his Deeds, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaketh.* In like manner *Tertullian* sayes, to *Scapula*, 'We do Sacrifice for the Health of the Emperor, but that Way that God pleases, by pure Prayer; so sayes he, 'Here we do swear by the Health of the Emperor, by willing his Health; and I do work for the Health of the Emperor; for I commend him to God * Otherwise, if we take the Words of this Doctor strictly and properly, who in writing is difficult, as *Scultetus* notes; and obscure, as *Lactantius* sayes, we shall both cross the Scope of the Place, and accuse him and the Primitive Christians and Martyrs of his time, not only of Swearing, but Sacrificing for the Health of the Emperor; neither of which do we ever read they did, nor as much as offered to do, had they, doubtless we should have heard of some Release or Favour shewn them on that Condescension: Besides we shall also make him to contradict himself (which *Scultetus* accuses him not of, in this) For in his Book *de Idololatria*, he speaks without any Obscurity; saying, 'I speak not of Perjury,

Rigaltius
 adds, 'I will
 speak plainly,
 that the
 Emperor is
 Lord, but as
 for the common
 man-
 ner.

Tertul. ad
Scap. c. 1, 2.

Apol. c. 33.

* I do offer
 Sacrifice by
 Prayer, c. 30.

Tertul. de
Idololatria,
 'seeing cap. 11.

seeing it is not Lawful to Swear. And in Chap.
 23. he proves, 'That he which signs a Bill
 'of Security containing and confirmed by
 'an Oath, is guilty of Swearing, as if he had
 'spoken it, and transgresses Christ's Command, who
 'hath prescribed not to swear. He is before speak-
 ing of the Idolatry, *Christians* are obnoxious to in
 regard of Imployments, as *School-Masters* by
 reason of *Heathenish Books and Customs*, and *Mer-*
 'chants or Traffiquers of Covetousness and Lying;
 'not to speak of Forswearing, saith he, *SEEING*
 'IT IS NOT LAWFUL SO MUCH AS
 'TO SWEAR; which if any should do, he
 'should surely be the Servant of Covetousness,
 'in undertaking an unlawful Practice for Gain,
 'as he sayes Lying was; but if they should also
 'Forswear, so adding Swearing to Lying, that should
 'be a Servant of Servants to Covetousness, that is *Idola-*
 'try: Which if *Christians* had committed indeed,
 it is unlikely that *Tertullian* would have made such
 a sleight and short preterition with a Sentence of
 Eight Words. And further observe, that both
Tertullian and the *Martyrs* make use of the most
 Universal Proof, to make their Testimony for
 God full and compleat. And though their E-
 nemies Tryal of them were short of proving them
Christians, and distinguishing them from *Jews*;
 yet in the Wisdom of God, their Answer and
 Argument being General and *Christian*, inclu-
 ding the Special and *Jewish*, proves them not on-
 ly true *Jews*, who were forbidden by God to For-
 swear,

swear; or to Swear by Idols; but true *Christians*, not to swear, because it was unlawful; for Christ had forbidden it: And as his Argument in the *Apology* aforesaid, was, *It is Unlawful to Swear, much more to Forswear*; so here, Christ (saith he) hath prescribed not to Swear, then sure not to Swear and subscribe *Gentile Oaths*. So *Basilides*, *Because I am a Christian, it is not lawful for me to swear*, then not your Oath: this is the just Sense and Consequence of it. And said *Polycarp*, *I would have thee to know, that I am a Christian, and the Doctrine thereof, if thou wilt appoint a Time, I shall teach thee* (that is, not to swear) therefore it is in vain for thee to bid me swear, and defie Christ: So *Blandina* and *Ponticus* were urged to Swear (by what it is not said, and it matters not) but in vain; for they were *Christians*: We do not read that any used the *Jewish Argument*, the old Commandment, *Thou shalt not Swear by Idols*; but the *Christian Argument*, the new Commandment, *It is not lawful to Swear, Christ forbade it, I am a Christian, &c.*

And to this Purpose speaks *Le Prieur* on this Place of *Tertullian*, in his Annotations (which the Publishers desired because of his Obscurity; see their Preface) 'Although, sayes he, the Christians did believe that * All Swearing was ^{It is confessed by le Prieur,} Forbidden them, they before all Oaths were aware of ^{that the Christians did de-} Swearing by the Genius, or Fortune of the Prince. ^{ny all Swear-} Here he confesses they were aware of All Swear-
ing, much more that which was never lawful, ing.

so wit, *Swearing by Idols*. And thereupon he brings the Example of *Polycarpus*: But if all Oaths, then of *Swearing by the Health of the Emperor*; for that was an Oath. And this *African Writer's* intricate Sense (as the Publisher's Terms are) must needs be in this as in the other, all along mystical: and as he sayes a little before, *I offer a Sacrifice (oratione) by Prayer*; so

Bruno and going along he sayes, *We Swear*, juramus, i. *jure oramus*; for so Bruno & Cassiodorus derive the on Psalm 14. Word, *Furare dictum est, quasi jure orare, hoc est, & Psalm. 61. jure loqui.*

This Cassiodorus was a Roman Senator & Counsellor of Theodoricus, about the year 490. Again, Ps. 61. 'They swear in God, or to God, or by God, who Promise an inviolable Obedience of Mind to him. *Furare* to swear (saith he) 'is, *jure orare*, to speak Equity, that he will not decline to another Party, from what he hath promised. Again, 'Here Swearing is firmly in mind to resolve to fulfil the good Purpose. And that this must be *Tertullian's* Sense, not only the Scope (for which see *Scultetus* on the Place) but his Explanation of it, by *willing what God wills, and that to be to them for a great Oath*; plainly declares to sagacious Readers, and such *Tertullian's African Speech* requires, as *Rigaltius*

* There are sayes of his Writings, which have been * altered of them that could not comprehend them. But is it likely that a Man so severe, that condemned the very subscribing of a Writing where in an Oath was contained, and for this Reason, because *Christ forbade to Swear at all*; and thought it needless

* There are
about 2000.
Corrections
in Tertullian
his Works.

needless to speak of Perjury, *because it was not lawful to swear*, should yet allow it in himself and others to swear even by that which was not God? Besides, *Snarez* reckons him amongst those Fathers who were more especially against Swearing.

Snarez. de Joram. c. 2.

Thus are the Conspirers against this part of the Doctrine of Christ, and his Apostles, Primitive Fathers and Martyrs, forc'd out of that Sanctuary they betook themselves to, in the Sentence of this intricate Doctor.

Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 7.

XXXVI. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, his Contemporary, famous for Learning and Strict Living, to help him in his Mystical Meaning of an Oath, sayes, 'He who is once a Believer, why shall he make himself an *Unbeliever, as * *Infidelity*. 'that he hath also need to Swear, and doth not keeps Com- 'so lead his Life, that the same (to wit, his Life) pany with 'be a firm and definite Oath, and shew the Faithful- Swearing: 'ness of Confession in a constant and stable Speech — And for a 'Far be it, that he who is approved and discern- Christian to 'ed in such Piety, should be propense to Lye Swear, is 'or to Swear——He who liveth justly, trans- with Clem. 'gressing in nothing of these things that should turn In- Alexandr. 'be done, the same sweareth truly and honestly by fidel again. 'his Deeds and Works (Mark how this agrees with *Tertullian's* improper Swearing) 'the Testi- 'mony of the Tongue is superfluous to him—— 'It sufficeth to add unto his Affirming or Deny- 'ing this, viz. *I SPEAK TRULY*, that he beget 'Faith.

'Faith in them who perceive not the Stability
 'of his Answer : For it becometh him, as I
 'judge (saith he) to have a Life worthy of
 'Credit (or Faith) among those that are with-
 'out, that an Oath be not sought from him—
 'Neither doth he Swear, as being one, who *hath*
 'determined to put for his Affirming *Y E A*, for his
 'Denying *N A Y*.

— 'Where is there any need of an Oath to him
 'that so lives, as one that is attain'd to the height of
 'Truth? He therefore that doth not Swear, is
 'far from Forswearing: He that transgresseth in
 'nothing that is covenanted and agreed, *HE*
 'MAY NEVER SWEAR.

— 'Seeing he is fully perswaded that God
 'is every where, and is ashamed not to speak
 'Truth, and professeth that it is a thing unbe-
 'seeming, and unworthy for him to speak False,
 'he is content with this, that God and his own
 'Conscience know it, and therefore he doth not
 'Lye, nor do any thing besides or against what is
 'covenanted and agreed: *By that means he nei-*
 '*ther sweareth, if he be asked; nor denies, so as*
 '*to speak false, though he dye upon the Rack for it.*

Likewise in his 5th, 7th and 8th Books of
Strom. also in his 3d Book of his *Pedagogue* with
Gentianus Hervetus's Notes on it, 'where he for-
 'bids to set Two Prices, and commands but one sin-
 'gle one, and to speak Truth *WITHOUT* an Oath, &c.

Origen in *Matth. Tract. 25.*

XXXVII. *Origen*, his Successor, a Man of equal Fame for Learning and Piety, succeeds him also in this Testimony concerning Swearing:

‘Because, saith he, the *Jews* have a Custom

‘to swear by *Heaven*; to the fore-going (Prohi-

‘bition) Christ added this also to reprove them,

‘because they more easily swore by *Heaven* than

‘by *God*; because he deals alike unreasonably,

‘who sweareth by *HEAVEN*, as he that swears

‘by the *TEMPLE*, or by the *ALTAR*, in

‘that who sweareth by *Heaven*, seemeth to swear by

‘him that sitteth in that *Throne*, and doth not escape

‘Danger, as he thinks, because he sweareth not by

‘*God* himself, but by the *Throne* of *God*: And these

‘things he speaks to the *Jews*, forbidding them

‘to give heed to the Traditions of the *Pharisees*;

‘* otherwise, before, *HE MANIFESTLY FOR-*

‘*BAD TO SWEAR AT ALL.*

‘The Chief Priest said unto him, *I adjure*

‘thee by the *Living God*, that thou tell us if thou be the

‘*Christ* the Son of *God*.

‘In the Law we find the Use of Adjuring;

‘The Priest shall adjure the Woman with the Adjura-

‘tions of this Curse.

‘Also *Ahab* said unto *Micheas*, *I adjure thee*

‘that thou tell me the Truth in the Name of the Lord.

‘The King adjured the Prophet, not by Com-

‘mand of the Law, but by his own Will. And now

‘the Priest adjures *Jesus* by the *Living God*.

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But

He makes two Prohibitions, as we do: 1. Swear not by *God*; 2. by no *Creatures*.

Ibid. Tract. 35.
Mat. 26.

Num. 5. 19.

1 King. 22. 16.

But I account that a Man that will live according to the Gospel, *MUST NOT ADJURE ANOTHER*: For it is even like that which the Lord himself forbids in the Gospel, *BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, SWEAR NOT AT ALL*. For *Orig. against all Swearing with us; and Compelling.* if it be not lawful to swear, as to the Gospel-Command of Christ, it is also true, that it is not lawful to Adjure another, or compel him to Swear.

Huetius upon him addeth, that *Athanasius, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Hilary*, and many more were of the same Mind with him: and if so, we may without Offence add, upon that Respect our Superiors seem to carry to their Names, that it must needs be very remote from the Doctrine of the ancient Church, to fine, imprison, and bitterly treat those that for Conscience of that Gospel-Command do scruple an Oath in this Age.

Orig. on Jer.

A. 1, 2.

If thou wilt return, O *Israel*, saith the Lord, and put away thy Abominations, then shalt thou not remove. And thou shalt swear the Lord liveth in Truth, and Judgment, and Righteousness.

Origen here tells us, 'That this is a Reproof of them that did not Swear in Judgment, but without Judgment: Howbeit, we know (saith he) that the Lord said unto his Disciples, *BUT I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL*. Perhaps formerly it behoved them to Swear in Truth, Judgment and Righteousness; that after any had given Proof of his Integrity, he might be thought worthy of being believed *WITHOUT*

' *WITHOUT ANY OATH AT ALL.* But once
' having *YEA*, he needs no Witness that it is
' *YEA*; and having *NAY*, he needs no other
' Evidence to prove that it is *NAY*.

Thus doth *Origen* prefer and extol Evangelical Verity, wrapt up in solemn *Yea* or *Nay*, above the Swearing that was in Truth, Judgment and Righteousness under the Dispensation of the Law.

Socrates Scolast. lib. 4. cap. 22. of his Ecclesiastical History.

XXXVIII. *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, so called from his working of Miracles, on *Eccles.* lib. 46. cap. 8. saith, 'It is meet to give diligent heed to the Words of the King, and to flee an Oath by all means, especially that which is taken in the Name of God. See his great Praise, his Works and Miracles.

Cyprian Lib. 3. Testim. ad *Quirin.*

XXXIX. *Cyprian*, a famous Father, and faithful Martyr (who lived about the middle of the Age, in the beginning of which *Origen* flourished) in his third Book of Testimonies to *Quirinus*. 'Who hath desired me (said *Cyprian*) to draw out of the holy Scriptures certain Heads, belonging to the Religious Discipline of our Sect (for so he calleth his own, the Christian Religion) His 12th Head amongst them is, 'Not to Swear.

Again, Writing of Pastors and Teachers, *Cypr. Epist.* he biddeth them, 'Remember what the Lord ad *Corn. n. 5*

taught, and said, *Let your saying be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay.*

Cyprian de
Mortal.

In another Place he saith, *'It is unlawful for any man to compel another to take an Oath.*

Hitherto the *Christians*, being under most cruel Sufferings, generally kept faithful to the Command of Christ in this Point; and so we find very little in their Writings about it, besides a simple and bare asserting of it as the Doctrine of Christ, *not to swear at all*, as well as it was of Moses, *not to swear falsely or vainly*; for more was no way needful, in that it was not Contested, but universally so Received. But after that *Christian-Emperors* had engaged themselves in Parties, then it seems many out of Flattery, and to engage them to their Sect, took Liberty to Swear, *even by the Health of the Emperor*, as is objected against us by some out of *Eusebius*; but such he did not account Religious; neither that a Religious Part so to do, much less an *August Act*; and least of all, a most *August Act* of Divine Worship, as some would have it; seeing *Stobaeus* observes from him, That whereas many

Euseb. apud exhorted that they be honest and faithful in an Oath, *he, Stob. de Jure-* for his part, *esteemed it not the Part of a Religious Man, not to avoid even Swearing it self.* And we believe it will

Jur. c. 27.

be a hard Matter to find any in the *Greek Church*, especially for the first Three Hundred Years, that would allow Swearing so large a Place in Sacred Things, yea, or in later Ages either, even in the *Latin Church*; nay, of those who have allowed it in some Cases, many or most of them have denyed it any Place at all in the Worship of God, as of it self, accounting it an *Abatement*, rather than an *Advancement* to Christianity, which no part of the true Worship of God can be. But some perhaps taking of *Tertullian's* word *Augustior*, or more *August*, (which he sayes, the Safety of the Emperor is, in Comparison of all the *Genius's*) to be the highest Act of God's Worship,

Worship, they would have us swear by that, after the Example of those mention'd in some *Christian-Emperors* Times. *Tertullian's* Sense we shall easily grant; for it is so, and we do so, in that we commend our Prince and Governours to God, to God only, with earnest and sincere Desires for his and their Safety, above all such Genius's, as *Tertullian* calls *Dæmonia*. But we justly deny upon the score of what we have made appear to the contrary, even from *Tertullian* himself, and others, That he, or the *Christians* in his time, or for Two Hundred Years before, or a Hundred Years after, did swear, as some would have us, *least of all as a most August Act of the Worship of God, without which all others are unacceptable*; or that those who did swear afterwards were the most Religious; seeing *Eusebius* esteems otherwise, and not he only, but also those very Devout Men that we have already produced, besides many which might and may be mentioned: For, all that we have yet met with, in those Times, that speak of it, speak against it; and of the following Times Men of greatest Renown and Authority, labour'd with all Earnestness to expel *Oaths* the Society of *Christians*, and cure them of that Distemper by inculcating the Doctrine of Integrity, that needs no Oath; proving by holy Scripture, that it was the plain and absolute Law of Christ, that *Christians ought not to swear at all*; and by other Arguments, that the Original of Oaths was neither from God, nor good Men: But they crept into Use through the Corruption of Times, and meer Carelessness of Governments; for, when they could not trust one another, they called their God's to witness; but God separating *Abraham* and his Posterity from among them, to himself, the better to draw them from Idols, commanded them to swear by him only: as much as if he would have said; If you will Swear, let it be by my Name rather than Idols, that so you may, though it be after a mean manner, acknowledge a real Deity, the Only Lord of all: But how long was this Condescension to last?

But

But till the Fulness of Time came; That, with other Per-
missions, removed all Swearing, Christ bringing men to the
Truth in the Inward Parts, as in the Beginning, before
Swearing was in being; *for from the Beginning it was
not so.*

But to shew what other *Fathers* Reasons & Testimonies
against this *Heathenish* and *Jewish* Usage, indeed Bondage,
were, at the coming in of the Apostacy, we shall begin
with *Athanasius*, a Man that was in great Renown in the
dayes of *Constantine* the Great, and whose Creed is the
Faith and Test of *Christendom* at this day,

Athanasius on the Passion of *Christ*.

X L. ' The Evangelical Sentence of
' the Lord is, *Let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay,*
' *Nay:* Thus far we, who are in Christ, may
' confirm our Words with Asseverations, and
' with *no further Progress let us flee to or approach*
' *Oaths*, that we alledge not God for Witness for
' Corruptible Money's sake, especially since
' *Moses* so sets down the Law; *Thou shalt not take*
' *the Name of the Lord thy God in a vain thing.* For
' if any one is plainly worthy to name God, he
' is also worthy of Belief; For, whosoever is
' meet for greater things, he will be much more
' fit for less: On the contrary, if he be not wor-
' thy Belief, that he may be credited without an
' Oath, *surely he is not one that is worthy to name God.*
' If he be not faithful in Word, how will God
' by any means be the Witness of an Oath for
' him, who is destitute of Faith, to which God
' hath Respect? ' Again, *The Lord is nigh to all*
' *that*

'that call upon him in Truth; by which alone the
 'Lord can be called upon: Wherefore why do
 'they swear by God, *who are not trusted even in small*
 'Matters? Otherwise, an Oath is a Testimo- *Athanasius his*
 'ny of Truth, and not a Judge of Businesses, *Abhorrence*
 'men do swear, not that they may signifie Busi- *and Derision*
 'nesses, but that they may confirm the Truth; *of Oaths.*
 'and that they may shew, that those things
 'which they produce, are without Lying: If
 'therefore he that swears hath Faith and Truth,
 'WHAT USE IS THERE OF AN OATH?
 'But if he hath no Faith nor Truth, why do we
 'undertake such an Impiety, that for poor silly
 'Men, and those mortal too, we call to Witness GOD,
 'that is above men? For if it be a base Part
 'to call to witness an Earthly King to the lowest
 'Judicatures, as one that is greater then both
 'Actors and Judges; why do we cite him that is
 'uncreated to created things, and make God to be
 'despised of men? HOUT, that exceeds all Ini- *Athanasius*
 'quity and Audaciousness: What then is to be *his Reason*
 'done? NO MORE but that our YEA be YEA, *and Dislike*
 'and our NAY be NAY; and in short, THAT *of Oaths.*
 'WE DO NOT LYE. But if we shall seem to
 'speak Truth, and imitate the true God, some
 'perchance may thus contradict.

• If an Oath be forbidden to men, and a *Object.*
 • man imitates God in not Swearing, how is it
 • that God is related in the holy Scriptures to swear?
 • for he swore to Abraham, as Moses witnesseth:
 • And it is written in the Psalms, The Lord swore,
 • and

• *and will not repent, &c.* For these things seem
 • to be repugnant to the former; and that there-
 • by there is permitted to men a Liberty of Swea-
 • ring.

Ans.

• But this is not so, nor can any think so :
 • For God sweareth by none; for how can he,
 • seeing he is Lord and Maker of all things? But
 • if any thing, this must be said, that *His Word is an*
 • *Oath, inducing the Hearers by a sure Faithfulness, that*
 • *what he promiseth & speaketh, shall certainly be effect-*
 • *ed; sith God sweareth not as Man, but his Word to us*
 • *is as an Oath for Verity.* And speaking to men, he
 • is said to swear: And this also the Saints do ut-
 • ter after the manner of men; that as they them-
 • selves speaking would have Credit to be given
 • them, so likewise they themselves should give
 • Credit to God: For, as a man's Word confir-
 • meth an Oath, so also those things that God
 • speaketh, because of the Firmness and Im-
 • mutability of his Will *are to be reputed Oaths.*
 • The same also that is there written confirm-
 • eth my Saying, *For the Lord hath sworn, and will*
 • *not repent;* as a thing not to be retracted by Re-
 • penting, but certainly to be effected, according
 • to the Engagement of an Oath. This also God doth
 • declare in Genesis, saying, *I have sworn by myself:*
 • But that is *not an Oath;* for he swore not by ano-
 • ther, which is proper for an Oath, but by himself,
 • which contains not the Estimation of an Oath.
 • But this is done *that the Sureness of his Promise may*
 • *appear;* and how confidently that ought to be
 • believed

Athanasius
 will not have
 it, that God
 ever swear,
 properly &
 strictly tak-
 en; only in a
 way of spea-
 king, having
 the Truth &
 Immutabili-
 ty of the tru-
 est and grea-
 test Oath

' believed which is spooken. That sweet
 ' Psalmist will witness for me in his Psalm, cal-
 ' ling God to mind, when he saith, *Where are*
 ' *thy ancient Mercies, O Lord, which thou swearest to*
 ' *David thy Servant, in (or by) thy Truth?* For
 ' God sweareth not by his Truth; But because
 ' he, who is *True*, speaketh in his Word, That
 ' to men is for an Oath unto Belief. So God
 ' doth not swear after the manner of men:
 ' neither must we be induced thereby to take
 ' Oaths; but let us so Say, and so Do, and so
 ' approve our selves in saying and doing, that we
 ' need not an Oath for the Hearer; and that our
 ' Words of themselves may have the Testimony
 ' of Truth: For, by that Way we shall plainly
 ' imitate God.

Hilary on Mat. 5. 34.

X L I. *Hilary*, a Father, very Famous in the
 dayes of *Constantius*, Son to *Constantine* (but an
Arrian, and which was worse, a Persecutor, so
 that this *Hilary* was banished) in his Commem-
 tary on those words in *Matthew*, *Ye have heard*
that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not For-
swear thy self, &c. thus expresseth himself, ' The
 ' Law set a Penalty for Perjury, that the Consci-
 ' ence of Religion or Fear of an Oath might re-
 ' strain the Deceitfulness of Minds; for the rude
 ' and insolent People made frequent mention of
 ' their God by a familiar Course of Swearing:
 ' But *Faith* doth remove the Custom of an Oath,
 H ' making

'making the Businesſes of our Life to be deter-
 'mined in Truth, and laying aſide the affecting
 'to deceive; preſcribing the Simplicity of Spea-
 'king and Hearing, that what WAS, WAS;
 'what WAS NOT, WAS NOT; that the Buſineſs
 'of Deceiving might be apparent between IT
 'IS, and IT IS NOT; and what is more, is all of
 'Evil: *For what is, it is its Property alwayes, that*
 '*ſo it is; and what is not, it is its Nature, that it is*
 '*not: Therefore to them that live in the Simplicity*
 '*of Faith, there is no NEED of the Religion (or*
 '*Superſtition) of an OATH; with whom alwayes*
 '*what is, IS; what is not, IS NOT: And by theſe*
 '*both all their Words and Deeds are in Truth. Nei-*
 '*ther by Heaven] God not only ſuffers us not to make*
 '*Oaths to God, becauſe all the Truth of God is to be*
 '*held in the ſimplicity of our Word and Deed; but*
 '*alſo condemneth the Superſtition of old Diſobedi-*
 '*ence, &c.*

This, if that
 Clemens,
 ſhould have
 been firſt, be-
 cauſe he liv'd
 in Paul's
 time; but we
 were not wil-
 ling to begin
 our Testimo-
 nies with a
 Suſpicion:
 howbeit it is
 an Ancient
 Writing.

Suarez de Joram. l. 1. c. 1, 2.

XLII. The next Teſtimony we ſhall pitch
 upon in Confirmation of our Reaſons, and the
 Senſe we take our Maſter's Precept in, *Swear not at*
all, is afforded us out of the Apoſtolical Inſtitutions
aſcribed to Clemens Romanus, reported by Suarez,
in his Book de Juramentis, 'Our Maſter (ſaith
Clemens) hath commanded, that we SHOULD
'NOT SWEAR, no, not by the True God; but that
'our Word ſhould be more credible then an Oath it ſelf.
 Which is a plain Indication of the Apoſtolical
 Do-

Doctrine to have been the absolute *Prohibition* of *Oaths*, in that Sense wherein they were only reputed *Lawful*: for if men ought not to Swear, no, not by the true God; then consequently by no other Oath, as his following words not only imply, but express, viz. *‘That the Word of a Christian should be more credible then an Oath it self.* Again, *‘He that in the Law established to Swear well, l. 6. c. 28. and forbade False Swearing; commanded also, NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL.*

Orthodoxagrapha p. 11.

LXIII. There is a Tract, call'd, *The Gospel of Nicodemus*: We know it is reputed spurious, but that makes nothing against us; that disputes the *Author*, and not the *Matter*; for though *Nicodemus* never wrote such a Book, certain it is that such a Book was written, which is in Favour of *Christianity*, as then received: In the Place cited *Pilate* is made to say, *‘I adjure you by the Health of Caesar, that these things that you say, &c.* They answer'd, *‘We have a Law, not to SWEAR, because it is a Sin.* Whoever wrote it, this Benefit cometh to our Argument, that the *Christians*, at that time, thought an *Oath* a *Sin*; for it is not to be doubted, but he that gave that Answer, knew it to be the *Doctrine and Practice* of *Christians*; for he was therein to represent them.

Basilus Magnus on Psalm 14.

XLV. *Basil*, called the Great, another Champion of the like Fame, and in the same time of *Valens*, the Persecuting *Arrian* Emperor, by whom he suffered Imprisonment and Cruel Threatnings (see their Praises in *Socrates Scholasticus*) on the 14th Psalm, with us the 15th, *He that sweareth, and deceiveth not his Neighbour*; so *Basil* hath it, and upon it these words:

Socrat. Eccl. Hist. lib. 4. cap. 21.

‘Here he seemeth to allow an Oath to a
‘Perfect Man, which in the Gospel is ALTO-
‘GETHER forbidden; But I say unto you, not to
‘Swear at all.

‘What shall we say then?

‘That every where the Lord, as well in the
‘old as in the new Law, hath the same Consideration of Commanding; for desiring to anticipate the Effects of Sins, and prevent them by Diligence, and to extinguish Iniquity at the first beginnings, As the old Law saith, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*; the Lord saith, *Thou shalt not Lust*: The old Law saith, *Thou shalt not Kill*; the Lord ordaining Perfection, saith, *Thou shalt not be Angry*: So also in this place, the Prophet indeed seemeth to assent to an Oath; but the Lord, to take away all Occasion of Perjury, and willing to prevent the Dangers of Swearers, takes away Swearing ALTOGETHER: For he names an Oath in many places the immutable and firm Constancy of any
‘thing

' thing or purpose. *I have sworn, and have sted-*
 ' *fastly purposed to keep the Judgments of thy Righte-*
 ' *ousness:* *Alto, The Lord hath sworn, and will not*
 ' *repent.* Not that *David* brought the Lord for
 ' a Witness of his Sayings, and to get Belief to
 ' his Doubting, but that he confirmed the Grace
 ' of his Profession by an Immutable and firm De-
 ' cree: so also he could have said here, that is,
 ' *He that sweareth, and deceiveth not his Neighbour,*
 ' that it may agree with the Saying of our Savi-
 ' our, *Let your Word be YEA, YEA; NAY, NAY.*
 ' To things that are, thou mayst affirm and assent;
 ' but of things that are not, although all men
 ' urge thee, yet thou mayst never be drawn by
 ' any means to affirm against the Nature of the
 ' Truth: Is the thing not done, let there be a
 ' Denyal; is it done, let it be affirmed *by Word.*
 ' And he that shall not assent to him so affirming, * Pray mark
 ' let him look to it, and feel the Harm of his Un- where Basil
 ' belief. It is a base and a very foolish thing to layeth the
 ' accuse one's self, as one unworthy of being believed, Blame, if a
 ' and to betake and refer one's self to the Security of an Word go not
 ' Oath. Now, there are some Speeches which for an Oath.
 ' have the Forms of Oaths, and yet are no Oaths at
 ' all, but rather Remedies to perswade; as *Joseph* Joseph swore
 ' to make the *Egyptian* familiar with him, swore not.
 ' by the Health of *Pharaoh* (*אשר אלהיך חי* live
 ' *Pharaoh*) And the Apostle, willing to shew his
 ' Love to the *Corinthians*, said, *By the Glorifying of*
 ' *you, which I have in Christ Jesus, our Lord:* For Paul swore
 ' he did not depart from the Doctrine of the Go- not.
 ' spel

Ad Nepotes. 'spel, who, by a thing before all most dear unto
 'him, simply sought Belief to the Truth. He
 refused to swear at the Council of Chalcedon: And
 speaking of *Clineas*, a Pythagorean, who might have
 above 300 l. avoided a Mule of Three Talents, if he would have
 sworn, which he rather suffered; saith, 'In keeping
 'these things he seems to have heard that Com-
 'mand concerning an Oath that is forbidden us.
 And he upbraided the Christians of his time with it,
 that would swear.

This *Basil* the Great, in his 29th Canon to
Basil. Mag. Amphilochius, writes thus, 'Because an Oath is
 can. 29. 'ALTOGETHER FORBIDDEN, such an one as
 'is taken to an Evil Purpose, is much more to be
 'condemned — Again, 'If an Oath, simply as
 'such, be prohibited, of greater Reason when it
 'is to effect some Mischievous End — The
Basil's Expe- 'Cure consisteth in a twofold Admonition;
 dient, to re- '1. NOT TO SWEAR; 2. TO SUPPRESS THE
 move Oaths. 'FORM OF OATHS.

Blastaris Syntagma Tit. E. c. 32.

X L V. There was an ancient Law made
 to this effect, 'It is FORBIDDEN to all, from
 'the Bishop and Clergy-Men to the Readers, to
 'TAKE ANY OATH AT ALL.

Blastaris also brings in this Objection, 'But
 'since those are punished who swear falsely, and
 'those are passed by who swear well, some may
 'say, Therefore it is permitted to swear. To which
 he answers, 'But where shall we dispose, or how
 'shall

' shall we dispense with the Evangelical Precept
 ' in the Gospel, *THAT FORBIDS STAKING*
 ' *ANY OATH AT ALL?* Adding, ' But I be- The Reason
 ' lieve that the Gospel endeavoured to root out of prohibi-
 ' that Wicked Stem (as I may say) which is in ting Oaths.
 ' sinful men, and *FOR THAT CAUSE PRO-*
 ' *HIBITED AN OATH*, which is as the
 ' Door or In-let to Perjury.

Gregor. Nyssenus on Cant. orat. 13.

XLVI. *Gregory Nyssenus*, Brother to *Basil*,
 spoken of by *Socrates Scolasticus* in the same place,
 and in lib. 5. cap. 9. His Works are Famous :
 And in his Explanation on the *Canticles*, bestows
 this Testimony upon us : ' He, who by *Moses*
 ' established the Beginnings of the Law, by
 ' himself fulfilled all the Law and the Prophets,
 ' as he saith in the Evangelists : *I came not to destroy*
 ' *the Law, but fulfil it* ; who taking away Anger,
 ' abolisheth Killing also ; and together with Lust,
 ' took away Adultery. He also casts out of men's
 ' Lives accursed Perjuries, whilst by the Prohibi-
 ' tion of an Oath, he has put in his Stead as it were to
 ' Security : For it cannot be, that any should not
 ' keep an Oath when there is no Oath ; There-
 ' fore saith he, *You have heard, that it was said to*
 ' *them of old time, Thou shalt not Forswear, but shalt*
 ' *render to the Lord thy Oaths* ; but I say unto you,
 ' *SWEAR NOT AT ALL*, neither by Heaven,
 ' &c. but let your YEA be YEA, and your NAY,
 ' NAY ; for whatsoever is more, is of the Devil.
 Thus

Thus do they mostly end, which shows how they understood Christ's Words.

Greg. Nazianz. in his Dialogue against Swearing,
Jamb. 20.

XLVII. *Gregory Nazianzen*, a great Man in the Church, also speaketh to the same Purpose, in his Dialogue against Swearing, saying, 'B. *What Oath dost thou leave to us?* A. I wish I might leave none, and that there were never any more. But thou sayest, We have heard that God himself sometimes swore: The holy Scriptures record that; But is there any thing better then God? Surely nothing is found better then He: If therefore nothing be better then he, it should follow, that he never swears. B. *Why therefore do they record that he swore?* A. When God saith any thing, that is the Oath of God. B. *And how doth he swear by himself?* A. How! He should not at all be God, if he should lye. B. *Thou speakest strangely!* A. No Wonder; that is the Nature of God peculiarly, that he cannot lye: There is none that can deny this. B. *But what wilt thou say to me of the old Covenant? Surely it doth not prohibit an Oath, but requires a true one?* A. No Wonder: At that time only it was prescribed in the Law concerning Murder; but now it is not lawful for any Cause so much as to smite or beat: then the End of an Evil Deed only came into Judgment; but now that also which moveth to the End, This

God swears
not.

' This is my Judgment : for now we have made
 ' a long Progress ; wherefore a Wise Man will
 ' abstain from Oaths. B. *What then? Dost thou*
 ' *give to some as Infants a kind of first Food, that*
 ' *they may at length receive a succeeding kind of Meat?*
 ' A. Thou judgest right and wisely. B. *But*
 ' *Paul also swore, as they say?* A. Who said so? *Paul did not*
 ' Oh, what a vain Jangler was he that said it! *Swear.*
 ' Quoth he, *God is my Witness, and God knoweth:*
 ' Those words are not an Oath, but a certain Af-
 ' severation in such great things, constant and
 ' inviolable. B. *Wilt thou allow the same also to*
 ' *me?* A. I wish, that to thy Power thou wouldst
 ' plainly become a *Paul*, and so thou wouldst have
 ' a Right Rule of thine Actions. B. *What if*
 ' *I use an Oath Unwillingly, but to free me from Dan-* See *Tertullian*.
 ' *ger?* A. Let another allow thee that. B. *as before, to*
 ' *What if an Oath be written, and not pronounced with whom this a-*
 ' *grees.*
 ' *the Voice?* A. And what's the Meaning of a
 ' Writing? Surely amongst all other Obligations,
 ' a Writing doth more bind and oblige us. B.
 ' *What if we be drawn by Necessity to give an Oath?*
 ' A. Why didst thou not rather Dye? For sure- Mark how
 ' ly, thou shouldst rather Dye than do that. *Gregor. Naz.*
 ' B. *What if the Books of the holy Scriptures be not* Scripture, in
 ' *used?* A. What! Is Religion placed in a Comparison
 ' * Leaf? Is God absent by this Means? It is evi- of God's O-
 ' dent that thou fearest (*Paper, or*) Parchment, n presence
 ' and I fear God more: This is a frequent Dis- with the *mind*
 ' ease to many, and usual; neither is it other- and the *sense,*
 ' wise then if a Man beat the Master, and Dis- and regard
 ' man ought to
 ' grace have of it.

' grace him, and make his Servant a Free-man, and
 ' do him Honour (*What a notable Reproach should that*
 ' *be*) ' or as if a Man should preserve the King's
 ' Image, and in the mean time destroy the King.
 ' B. *It is even as thou sayest : But I would have thee say*
 ' *what is more to be shewn.* A. Many use to say, I
 ' swore with my Tongue, but my Mind is free from
 ' Swearing. Any thing may be more cunning-
 ' ly excused then an Oath : Let him not suffer
 ' any Colour to be made for himself; For this is
 ' an Oath : And how much Mischief, tell me,
 ' comes from Deceit it self? Let us see what an
 ' Oath is : Nothing else but the very Meaning
 ' (*or Mind*) of those things which we set down—
 ' Thou wouldst have me add what remains: Surely
 ' an Oath is nothing else, but a certain Consum-
 ' mation as it were of Miscchiefs : O Dangerous
 ' Flame ! B. *But Plato doth some such thing :*
 ' *He is Religiously aware, that he swear not by any God.*
 ' A. Truly I know what thou art about to say :
 ' There was a certain Plane Tree, by which alone
 ' he made Oath : But he did not swear rightly,
 ' neither by that; For he had an Understanding in
 ' something; but what a just & religious Oath
 ' should be, that he could not understand. And
 ' what was this, tell me now? A certain Shadow of
 ' an Oath; a Declaration without a Name; an Oath no-
 ' Oath, as the Philosophers swore by a strange and
 ' unknown God. Lastly, it is nothing else, but
 ' to make Oath by any thing. Here our Speech let
 ' be an-End. Thou threatnest that thou wilt leave
 ' me

Greg. Naz.
 his Account
 of an Oath.

'me athirst sooner then I would. *A.* If an
 'Oath seem a small thing to thee, truly I can-
 'not commend thee: But if it is, as it is, in the
 'number of horrible things, I will also dare to
 'produce a mighty thing: I do adjure by a very
 'Oath it self, that thou abstain from, and beware
 'of Oaths, and thou hast the Victory. *B.* I
 'wish I had. What Fruit gets he that often
 'swareth? Laughter. What more? That when
 'he speaks Truth, he shall not be believed.

In another place he saith, 'That to swear by *Greg Naz.*
 'Creatures is to swear with regard to God him- *on Cant.*
 'self; to Christ himself saith, *Mat. 5. 35.* and *Hom. 18.*
 'chap. 23. 16, 23.

Casarius, Num. 43.

XLVIII. *Casarius*, Brother to *Gregory Na-*
xianzen, in his *Spiritual Sentences*, hath this Sen-
 'tence, '*Flee ALL Swearing, or EVERY Oath:*
 'How then shall we get Belief? As well by
 'speech as by virtuous Actions and Carriages,
 'that gain Belief to our Speech. Perjury is a
 'Denying of God: What need of God in this
 'Matter? *Interpose and put in use thy Actions.*

Epiphan. adv. Heres. lib. 1. ord. 19. §. 6.

XLIX. *Epiphanius*, whom *Socrates*
Scholasticus, lib. 6. cap. 9. calls a Man of great
Fame and Renown, and a *Virtuous and Godly Person*,
 in his first Book against Heresies (not account-
 ing Denying to Swear an Heresie, but rather the

contrary, as may appear by his words, which are these) 'In the Law, as well as the Gospel, 'it is commanded not to use another Name in 'Swearing: but in the Gospel *he commanded not to 'Swear, neither by Heaven nor Earth, nor other Oath, 'but let Yea Yea; Nay, Nay; BE AS AN OATH* as *Petavius* translates it) 'for what is more then these 'is of Evil. Therefore I suppose that the Lord 'ordained concerning this, because of some 'mens Allegations, that would swear by other 'Names; and first, that we must *not Swear, no, 'not by the Lord himself, nor by any other Oath; for it 'is an Evil thing to swear at all.* Therefore he is 'Evil that compel not only to swear by God, but 'by other things, &c.

Ambros. de Virgin. lib. 3.

L. *Ambrose*, soon after, being a Lay-man or Citizen of *Milan*, was by the People, against his Will, chosen Bishop of that City, for his great Worth and Godliness, whose Writings are of great Account; And speaking of the Inconveniency occasion'd by an Oath, saith, 'Wherefore not without Cause doth the Lord in the 'Gospel command not to Swear, that there may 'be *no Cause of Forswearing*, that there may be 'no Necessity of Offending.

Exhortat. ad
Virgin.

'He that Swareth not, certainly he never Forswareth; but he that Swareth, sometimes he must needs fall into Perjury, because all Men are subject to Lye. Do not
'there-

‘therefore Swear, lest thou beginnest to For-
‘swear.

‘Therefore the Lord, who came to teach the *Ambrose on*
‘little Ones, to * INSPIRE Novices, to con- *Mat. 5.*
‘firm the * Perfect, faith in the Gospel, YE *He was for*
‘MUST NOT SWEAR AT ALL; because he ** Inspiration*
‘spoak to the Weak. *& Perfection.*

‘*Lastly*, He spoak not only to the Apostles,
‘but to the Multitude; for he would not have
‘thee to Swear, lest thou shouldst Forswear.

‘And he added, *Not to swear, neither by Hea-*
‘*ven, nor by the Earth, &c.* namely, by those
‘things that are not subject to thy Power.

‘*The Lord Swore, and shall not Repent.* He may Psalm 109.
‘swear, who cannot repent of his Oath: And
‘what did the Lord swear? *That Christ is a Priest*
‘*forever:* Is that Uncertain? Is that Impossible? the
‘Lord has sworn. Can it any way be changed?

‘Do not therefore use the Example of an
‘Oath, because thou hast not Power to fulfil an
‘Oath.

Also, in his Commentary on the *Hebrews*,
he saith, ‘Because Mankind is incredulous, God *Amb. Com.*
‘condescendeth to us, if even he sweareth for *on Heb. c. 6.*
‘us.

So that he shews, that not to be an Argument for *Oaths found-*
Swearing to be desired, seeing it is only in Condescension *ed on Defect,*
to a Defect; not to be encouraged from it to swear, or *not to be en-*
to require it, *couraged;*
then not to

Chrysost. be imposed.

Chrysoſt. on Gen. hom. 15.

L. I. Chryſoſtom, in thoſe dayes very Famous in the Church, and therefore ſtyl'd the *Golden Doctor*; in his 15th Homily on *Genefis*, ſaith;
 'A *Chriſtian* muſt flee Oaths by all means, hearing the Sentence of Chriſt, which ſaith, *It was ſaid to them of old, Thou ſhalt not Forſwear; But I ſay unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL.*
 'Let none ſay therefore, I wear in a Juſt Buſineſs. IT IS NOT LAWFUL TO SWEAR:
 'NEITHER IN A JUST NOR UNJUST THING.

Id. Hom. III.

5.

'To ſwear is of the Devil, ſeeing Chriſt ſaith, *For what is more, is of Evil, or the Evil One.*

Ad pop. Antioch. Hom.

19.

'Swearing took not its Beginning from the Will, but from Negligence only. Thou haſt heard (ſaith he) the Wiſdom of Chriſt, ſaying, *That not only to Forſwear, but alſo in ANY MANNER TO SWEAR, is Devilish, and all a Device of the Evil One.*

Againſt the

Dupraiſe of

ſolitary Life

l. 1.

'IF TO SWEAR IS FOUND TO BE DEVILISH, how are they to be puniſhed who Forſwear?

Of Com-

punction of

Heart, l. 1.

'IF TO SWEAR TRULY BE A CRIME, and a tranſgreſſing of the Commandment, where ſhall we place *Perjury*?

Againſt the

Jews, Hom.

34.

Speaking of a *Chriſtian* (ſo call'd; for he that dare do ſuch things we cannot call a ſincere *Chriſtian*) whom he ſaw compelling a certain Honelt,

Honest, Ingenuous, Modest and Faithful Matron,
to go into the *Jews Synagogue*, there to be Sworn
about some Business in Controversie betwixt
them, she desiring Help, and imploring to be
freed from this Wicked Force, &c. 'I (saith he)

Agreeing
with *Ensebi-*
us before.

'kindled with Zeal, arose, and not suffering her to
'be further drawn into this Prevarication, re- The Godly;
'cued her; and enquired of him that had drawn Zeal of *Chry-*
'her to it, Whether he were a *Christian* or *Justom* Com-
'mendable.
'not? *Who confessing he was*; I severely urged
'and upbraided him with his Folly and Extream
'Madness; to go about to draw any Body, he
'professing himself to be a Worshipper of Christ, TO
'THE JEWS DENS, who had crucified him.

'And going on in speaking, I taught him out
'of the holy Gospel, THAT IT IS NOT Much less to
'LAWFUL TO SWEAR AT ALL, NOR TO force others,
'INCITE ANY TO SWEAR, after that; not *Chryf.* calls
'one that is a Believer or initiated, no, nor one that is Swearing &
'not initiated, to be drawn to that Extremity: After Compelling
'I had spoaken much, and a long time of it, I to Swear at
'delivered his Mind from the Error of Opinion, all, an Error;
'&c. then we are
Orthodox.

Be pleased to observe how *Chrysestom*, a Zealous and See his great
Famous Man, both for his Books, and the Perse-Praise in *Sec.*
cution that he suffered, being Patriarch or Prime O- *Schol.* l. 6. c. 3.
verseer of the Church at *Constantinople*, one of the Four He was of
of the chiefest in the World, uses no Distinction of pri- the Race of
vate and publick Oaths, the common Talk of our Im- *senators.*
posers; for here he labours against drawing any to Swear Remember
at all, even in Judicature, because it was not lawful TO *Tertullian's*
SWEAR Case by this,

SWEAR SO AT ALL, no, not as the Jews swore, much less as the Gentiles.

Homil. 28.
Ecclog. de
juram.

Again, 'Let none say to me, *What if any lay on me a Necessity of Swearing? And what if he do not believe?*

Hom. 5. ad
pop. Antioch.

'Certainly where the Law is violated one must not make any mention of *Necessity*; for there is one unavoidable *Necessity*, *NOT TO OFFEND GOD*. Moreover, this I say, That in the mean time we may cut off superfluous Oaths, those, I mean, which are made rashly and without any *Necessity* amongst Friends and Servants; And if thou take away these, in the other thou shalt need me no more: For that Mouth which hath learned to fear and flee an Oath, if any would compel it ten thousand times, it will never admit of falling into that Custom, &c.

Chrysoft. a.
gainst giving
an Oath.

'But if thou fear nothing else, at least fear that Book which thou takest in thy hands, bidding another to Swear; and when thou turnst it, and markst what *Christ* hath there commanded concerning Oaths, * *QUAKE & FORBEAR*.

Chrysoft. ex.
exhorts to be
Right Quakers
by Trembling,
& not Swearing.

'What doth it say then of *OATHS* there?
'Answ. But I say unto you, *Swear not at all*. Dost thou make that *Law* an Oath, which forbids to Swear. Oh Injurious, Oh Unjust thing! For thou dost as if a man should take for his Companion a *Law-giver that forbids to kill, and command him to be made a Murderer*. As therefore, when a Fight is begun, although we are often Reviled; yet

yet we endure it well, and we say to him that
 doth it, that Patron of thine hath hurt me, he
 holds my Hands; and this serves us for Solace.
 After the same manner if thou wilt exact an
 Oath of any, restrain thy self, and with-hold;
 and say to him that is about to swear, *What shall* Against
I do to thee, sith God hath commanded, neither to Compelling
swear, nor to compel to swear; he now with-holdeth me: to Swear, &
 This is enough for the Law-giver's Honour, shows how
 for thy Security, and his Fear who should swear, to avoid it.

Do thus much for me therefore, that they He differs
 that come hither may say, *That is not to be seen* much from
in any City, which is at Antioch; For they that inha- those that
bit that City had rather their Tongues should be cut out, punish us
then an Oath should proceed out of their Mouth, &c. for not
swearing.

What is it? Thou shalt render unto the Lord
 thy Oaths: that is, in swearing thou shalt speak On Mat.
 true; But I say unto you, NOT TO SWEAR Homil. 17. 1
 AT ALL: And then, to put off the Hearers,
 that they should not swear by God, he saith,
 Neither by Heaven, for it is the Throne of God;
 nor by the Earth, for it is his Foot-stool, &c. For he
 said not, because the Heaven is Fair and Great;
 nor because the Earth is Vile; but because
 that is the Throne of God, and this his Foot-stool;
 by all which he drives them to the Fear of God.

— What then, if any require an Oath, and im- Object.
 pose a Necessity of Swearing?

A. Let the Fear of the Lord be more for-
 cible to thee then all Necessity or Compulsion:
 For if thou wilt alwayes object such like Oc-

‘cassions, thou wilt keep none of those things
 ‘which are commanded: For thou mightst al-
 ‘so say it concerning thy Wife; *What if she be a*
 ‘*Scold? What if she be Nice and Curious?* And of
 ‘thy Right Eye; *What if I have a Delight in it,*
 ‘*and be inflamed with the Love of it, &c?* and so
 ‘thou wilt trample upon all things that are com-
 ‘manded. But in the Laws which Men com-
 ‘mand thou darest alledge no such thing, as, *What*
 ‘*if this or that, &c?* And if thou wilt keep the
 ‘Law of Christ, thou wilt not suffer any Com-
 ‘pulsion to hinder thee from the Observation
 ‘thereof, for he that heard the Blessedness that
 ‘is before, in the same Sermon, and shews him-
 ‘self such an one as Christ commenderh, he shall
 ‘suffer no such Compulsion from any, seeing
 ‘he is Venerable and Admirable with all Men.

Constancy
 in not Swea-
 ring getteth
 Veneration.

Object.

‘*What then shall we say is beyond Yea and Nay?*

‘A. Without doubt *AN OATH*, not Per-
 ‘jury; sith this is altogether manifest, and none
 ‘needs be taught that it is of Evil; and not so
 ‘much Superfluous, as Altogether Contrary.
 ‘Now, that is superfluous which is added need-
 ‘lessly, and too much; which surely is an Oath.

Great Rea-
 son.

Object.

‘*Why then shall this be said to be of Evil? And if*
 ‘*it was of Evil, how was it commanded in the Law?*

‘A. Thou wilt say that also concerning thy
 ‘Wife; How is it now *Adultery*, which was
 ‘sometime suffered? What then shall we say to
 ‘these things? But that many of those things
 ‘which were then spoaken, the Weakness of them
 ‘that

' that received the Law required: For it is a
 ' thing very unmeet for God to be worshipped
 ' with the Smell of Sacrifices, even as it is not
 ' congruent for a *Philosopher* to stutter and bable;
 ' Therefore such a Divorce is now called Adulter-
 ' ry; and an Oath now comes of Evil, when the
 ' *Increasing of Virtues are come to their Perfection.*
 ' But if these things had been the Laws of the
 ' Devil from the beginning, they had never come
 ' to such Proficiency; for unless those things had
 ' gone before, those other had never been so easi-
 ' ly received. Do not therefore desire the Virtue
 ' of those things, whose Use is now past. They
 ' were available indeed then when the time re-
 ' quired, yea, if thou pleasest, now also: For
 ' now their Virtue is shewn in that same thing
 ' also, wherein we most accuse; for that they
 ' now appear such, is their great Praise: For,
 ' unless they had nurs'd us up well and profitably,
 ' and had made us fit for the receiving of greater
 ' things, they would not now seem to us to be
 ' such. For as the Nurse's Teat, when it hath done all its
 ' Office, and brought the Child to the measure of the
 ' stronger Age, seems to be unprofitable; and the Pa-
 ' rents, who formerly judged the Teat to be Necessary for
 ' their Child, do afterwards pursue it with very many
 ' Scorns, and usually do not only make it Uncomely in
 ' Words, but also besmear it with certain bitter Juices
 ' of Herbs, that when they cannot bridle the eager un-
 ' seasonable Desire of the Child about it, they may
 ' quench it at least with those things. So also Christ
 ' said, It was of Evil; not that he might shew the

This is True
 Christian
 Doctrine.

With Chri-
 stians it
 ought to be
 so. What
 Evil is it
 then to hale
 men back
 again upon
 Penalties?

'old Law to be of the Devil, but that also he might re-
 'call them more vehemently from the old Vileness:
 'And these things he said unto his Disciples; but
 'unto the stupid *Jews*, and them that persist in
 'the same Impiety, as with a certain Bitterness,
 'he so compass their City, they being captiva-
 'ted with Fear, as that he made it inaccessible:
 'And because he could not hereby restrain them,
 'but that they again desir'd to see it, as Children
 'running back to the Teat, he took it quite away,
 'destroying it, and scattering them, most of them,
 'far away from it; as men usually shut up Calves
 'from their Dams, that they may gain them to
 'be weaned from their accustomed Food of Milk.

* A great
 Enemy to
 Images.

† The Reason
 why God ad-
 mitted Oaths.
 No Ordinance
 of God or man
 originally, but
 Corruption
 insensibly bro-
 ught it, & God
 only suffer'd it
 by a true Deity
 till the Times
 of Reformation.

'But if the old Testament were of the Devil,
 'he would not have forbidden * Images to be
 'worshipped; and to the contrary, have brought
 'in and commanded such a Worship as this; for
 'the Devil would have such a thing to be done.
 'But now we see that the Law did on the contra-
 'ry; and for that Cause also the Way of Swea-
 'ring was in times permitted, † lest men should
 'Worship Images, and Swear by them, Swear,
 'saith he, *by the true God*. So the Law brought
 'not a mean Good to men, but a very great
 'one, if it sought to bring them to solid Mear.

Object.

'What Evil therefore hath Swearing?

His Reason
 our Reason.

'Much Evil; without question; But now at
 'this time, after SO GREAT MANIFESTA-
 'TIONS of Power; not then by any means.

Object.

'Thou wilt say; *How can it be, that the same*
 'is sometimes Good, sometimes not?

‘ I will also produce too against thee, How is it
 ‘ that the same thing is sometimes good, some-
 ‘ times not good? Doth not all that is in the
 ‘ World proclaim the same, as, Educations,
 ‘ Arts, Fruits and all other things?

‘ Therefore first weigh that in our own Na-
 ‘ ture: For to be carryed in one’s Arms, is a
 ‘ good Part in the first Age, *afterwards a very pit-
 ‘ tiful thing.* To use Chew’d Meats in the begin-
 ‘ ning of one’s Life is good, *afterwards very full of
 ‘ Indecency and Loathsomness:* To be fed with Milk
 ‘ & to flee to the Nourishment of the Teats, at the
 ‘ first is profitable and wholesome, *but afterwards
 ‘ hurtful & noisom.* Thou seest how the same things
 ‘ are sometimes good, according to the times, and
 ‘ sometimes appear to be of another Nature: For
 ‘ it is a comely thing for a Child to wear a Child’s
 ‘ Vesture, *but shameful for a Man.* Wouldst thou
 ‘ also learn on the contrary, how those things
 ‘ are not fit for a Child, which are not for a Man?
 ‘ Give a Man’s Vesture to a Child, and great Laugh-
 ‘ ter will follow thereupon, and greater Danger in Go-
 ‘ ing, making him to reel this way and that way: Com-
 ‘ mit unto him the Care of Civil Businesses and Affairs;
 ‘ either to Traffique, or Sow or Reap, and again it will
 ‘ be very ridiculous. But what do I speak of
 ‘ these? Even Man-slaughter it self, which Christ
 ‘ calls evidently a *Work of the Devil,* sometime
 ‘ in due season done, hath been praised; as Phi-
 ‘ neas killed a Man, and it was reputed to him for
 ‘ Right conduct; Abraham also was not only a Ho-
 ‘ micide;

‘micide, but a *Parricide*; and *Peter* slew two, but
 ‘it was a *Spiritual Work*: So we must not only
 ‘consider the *Actions*, but the *Time*, *Cause*,
 ‘*Will* and *Difference* of *Persons*, and all other
 ‘*Circumstances*.

* Much re-
 garded and
 observed by
 venerable

Antiquity,

said *Jam. s*

and the Fa-

thers, part

2. page 36.

Act. Mon.

v. i. p. 701.

Again, in his *Imperf. Et* * *Work*, cap. 5.

‘It hath been said, *Thou shalt not Forswear*; but

‘*thalt perform to the Lord thy Oaths*: But I say unto

‘*you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL, &c.*] Behold

‘the fourth Command, which *Covetous Men*

‘account the least, because they do not account it

‘a Sin to Swear, without which the Command

‘of the Law cannot stand? For unless Swearing

‘it self be forbidden, False Oaths cannot be ta-

‘ken away, because out of Swearing springs up For-

‘swearing; for, whosoever swears often, at one

‘time or other swears falsely; for this Reason Sa-

‘*lomon* gives that Admonition, *Accustom not thy*

‘*Mouth to Swearing*; for there is much Danger therein.

‘For, as he that accustoms himself to talk much,

‘must needs at one time or other utter Unseason-

‘able Words; and he that useth frequently to

‘strike with his Hand, cannot but sometimes

‘strike Unjustly; so he that accustoms himself

‘to Swear in things Convenient, oft-times For-

‘swears himself, even against his Will (*Custom*

‘*prevailing in him*) in things superfluous; for we

‘can accustom our selves to any thing when we

‘will, but we cannot turn off that Custom when

‘we will. And what the Judgment of God

‘is against them that swear, *Solomon* teacheth;

' *A man, saith he, that Swears much, a Wound shall*
 ' *not depart from his House.* If then a Wound depart
 ' not from them that swear, how shall it at length
 ' depart from them that forswear. Tell me, my
 ' Friend, What dost thou get by Swearing? For
 ' if thy Adversary did believe that thou wouldst
 ' Swear well, he would never force thee to swear
 ' at all; but because he thinks thou wilt swear
 ' falsely, therefore it is that he compels thee to
 ' swear; and when thou hast sworn, he doth not
 ' sit down as satisfied in the Truth of thine Oath,
 ' but goes away full of Revenge, as it were in
 ' Condemnation of thy Perjury.

Excellently
 distinguish,
 and the Sor-
 didness of
 Oaths fully
 represented.

' An Oath never has a good End; for, some
 ' will judge thou hast sworn for Covetousness;
 ' and some too, that thou hast Forsworn: But
 ' they that are willing to suppose well of thee,
 ' although they do not believe thou hast sworn
 ' *FALSLY*, yet they are not able to affirm thou
 ' hast sworn *IN TRUTH*: But no man can main-
 ' tain thou hast done *RELIGIOUSLY*. By Swear-
 ' ing therefore thou comest into Reproach with
 ' thy Enemies, and into Suspicion with thy
 ' Friends. But thou wilt say perhaps,
 ' *What shall I do; he neither doth nor will believe*
 ' *me, unless I Swear?*

According
 to Eusebius.
 The Unhap-
 piness of
 Swearing,
 especially a-
 gainst Con-
 science. His
 Advice a-
 bout the
 Matter,
 when drove
 to a Pinch.
 Object.

' Be content rather to lose thy Money than
 ' thy Salvation; set more by thy Soul, than
 ' by thy Estate: If thou shouldst lose any part of
 ' thy Estate, thou may'st live notwithstanding;
 ' but if thou losest God, whereon wilt thou live?

' Dost

His Cauti-
on to those
that impose
Oaths, and
Reflection
upon the
Practice.

Lying as
bad as Swea-
ring in his
Esteem.

‘Dost thou not know, that what thou partest
‘Self-denyingly with for the Fear of God, thou
‘receivest a greater Reward for it, then if thou
‘hadst given Alms; because, the more we bear
‘the Cross, the more worthily are we crowned for
‘it? Behold, my Friend, *I advise thee not to Force any*
‘*man to swear;* if thou thinkest he will swear well,
‘avoid it; or if thou thinkest he will swear amiss,
‘avoid it so much the rather: For although he
‘swear well, yet thou, as far as relates to thy
‘Conscience, art become the Cause of his Per-
‘jury, *because thou compellest him to take an Oath*
‘*with this Intention, not barely that he should Swear,*
‘*but that he should Forswear;* for if thou hadst thought
‘he would have sworn honestly, thou wouldst not have
‘forced him to swear at all. Oh foolish man, that com-
‘pellest another to Swear! Thou knowest not what
‘thou doest: He, although he forswear himself,
‘yet does it with Advantage; but thou, without
‘any Advantage, art found a Partaker of his Perjury.
‘He that does not stick at Lying, does not fear
‘Swearing; for he that tells a Lye, goes beyond
‘the Truth in his Heart; and he that swears falsely,
‘passes over God in his Words: What then is the
‘Difference between passing over God, and go-
‘ing beyond the Truth, *seeing God is Truth it self?*
‘This is the only Difference, *That when we Lye,*
‘*we pass over the Truth in our Heart;* but when we
‘Forswear, *we pass over God in Words;* For, to men
‘we give Satisfaction by WORDS: to God, by
‘CONSCIENCE. God himself, who forbade
‘For-

' Forswearing, even he *afterward* commanded NOT
 ' TO SWEAR: He therefore that is not afraid o
 ' set light by the Commands of God in Swear- Admirably
 ' ing, will not be afraid to do the like in For- well argued.
 ' swearing. But what wouldst thou have? Doth
 ' he fear God, or doth he not fear him? If he be
 ' one that fears God, he will not Lye, though
 ' he be not sworn; but if he be one that does not
 ' fear God, he cannot speak Truth, though he
 ' be sworn. Hear, ye CLERGY-MEN, who His Rebuke
 ' bring the HOLY GOSPELS for men to swear to the Clergy
 ' upon; How can ye be secure from that Oath, who for tending
 ' sow the Seed of Perjury? He that brings the Fire by the Gospels
 ' which an House is burnt, is he a Stranger to the Burn- (or Bible) to
 ' ing? or who reaches a Sword, whereby a man is slain, swear on.
 ' is not he an Accessory to the Slaughter? So be that
 ' gives the Opportunity of Forswearing, is a Partaker of
 ' the Perjury: If it were well done to swear, ye said
 ' rightly, that we gave them the Gospel to Swear, not to
 ' Forswear; But now ye know, THAT IT IS A SIN
 ' EVEN TO SWEAR WELL, how can ye be ac-
 ' quitted that give the Occasion of Sinning against
 ' God? Let the Fire cease, and there is no Burning;
 ' take away the Sword, and the man is not slain; SO
 ' TAKE AWAY SWEARING, AND THERE
 ' IS NO FORSWEARING. Be these things
 ' spooken of them that swear by God? But as
 ' for them that swear by the Elements, their Ini-
 ' quity is more detestable; for Heaven and Earth,
 ' and the rest of the Elements God made for his
 ' own Service; not for men to swear by: For,
 L ' be-

' behold, in the Law it is commanded, that they
 ' should swear by none but God: He therefore
 ' that swears by Heaven, or by the Earth, or
 ' whatsoever it is he swears by, makes a God of
 ' it; Therefore every one commits *Idolatry*, who
 ' swears by any thing *besides* God, *if it were at all*
 ' *lawful to swear*, because he does not perform his
 ' Oaths to the Lord his God, but to the Ele-
 ' ments: And so he commits a double Sin; *first*,
 ' in that he swears; and *2dly*, in making a God
 ' of that by which he swears, &c.

Again, in Chap. 23. Homil. 43. on these
 words, *Wo unto you Blind Guides, who say, Whoso-*
ever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but who-
soever shall swear by the Gold of the Temple, he is a
Debtor — ' Many Christians (saith he) now
 ' adays do so unwisely understand many
 ' things; for lo, if there shall be any Cause,
 ' he seems to do a small matter, who swears by
 ' God; but he that swears by the Gospel seems to
 ' have done some greater thing: To whom it may
 ' be said, *Fools! The holy Scriptures are for God, not*
 ' *God for the Scriptures; for God is GREATER*
 ' *which sanctifieth the Gospel, then the Gospel which is*
 ' *sanctified of God.*

Again, Hom 9. on *Acts of the Apostles*, ch. 3.

' To this conduces not a little, *not to Swear*,
 ' and *not to be Angry*; for, in not being Angry,
 ' we shall not have an Enemy; and cast off a mans
 ' Oath, and withal thou shalt cast off those things
 ' that concern Wrath, and shalt extinguish all
 ' Anger.

' Anger: For Wrath and an Oath are like the
 ' Wind. We set forth sail, but there is no bene-
 ' fit of the Sail if there be no Wind: So if we
 ' do not cry out, nor swear, we cut the Sinews of
 ' Wrath. Come, tell me for what Cause an
 ' Oath was introduced, and why it was allowed?
 ' Let us tell its *Original*, and whence it sprung Again, the O-
 ' up again, and how, and by whom; and by our *original* of an
 ' Declaration we shall gratifie your Attention: Oath. He
 ' For, he that doth justly, must necessarily be al- ^{concur} with
 ' so studious of Wisdom; and he that is not yet ^{us}.
 ' such, is not worthy to hear a Discourse: For,
 ' *Abraham* made Covenants, and sacrificed Sacri-
 ' fices, and offered Offerings; and as yet there
 ' was not an Oath: Whence then came in an Oath:
 ' *When Evils increased, when all things became topsy-*
 ' *turvy, when they inclined to Idolatry; then verily*
 ' *when they appear'd unfaithful, they called God to wit-*
 ' *ness, as giving a Surety for Security for their Words;*
 ' *for an Oath is a Suretiship, where their Behaviours have* The Defect
 ' *no Trust or Credit:* Whereupon, first he that ^{gives} of an
 ' Swears is taxed, If he have no Credit without an Oath,
 ' Oath, and the greatest Surety: And because
 ' men so little trust one another, *they seek God for*
 ' *a Surety, not Man. Secondly, He is in the same*
 ' *Crime who receives an Oath, if he draw God*
 ' *to be a Surety for Contracts; and say, THAT*
 ' *HE WILL NOT TRUST EXCEPT HE*
 ' *HAVE HIM. Oh monstrous thing! Obshame-*
 ' *ful Disgrace! Thou a Worm, Dust and Ashes, and*
 ' *a Vapour; darest thou snatch thy Lord, who art such*

A severe Declaration against Compelling People to swear.

'an one for a Surety, and compellest to accept him? Tell me, if a Fellow-Servant should say to your Children, striving among themselves, and not trusting one another, Unless the common Master become a Surety, there is no trusting; would not many Stripes be inflicted, that he might learn, that he should make use of him as a Lord in other things, not in these? What do I speak of a Fellow-Servant? For, if one would have a more Venerable Man, would not the Case have Disgrace in it? But I shall (saith he) therefore neither compel him, because this is also amongst men. He may say thus, Sometimes thou may'st not receive a Surety to thine. What then? And I shall lose (saith he) what is given. I would not say this; but do not thou endure that God be reproached. Therefore he which Compels hath a MORE Unavoidable Punishment then he which Swears. Likewise he also which swears when none requires; this also is harder, that one swears for a Half-Penny, for a little Commodity, for Unrighteousness. And these things are so dangerous, when there are no Perjuries; but if Perjuries are committed, then all things are confounded, and both he that swears, and he that receives an Oath, are the Cause.

Again, of the Danger of Compelling People to swear.

Object.

'But there are some things that are not known; say they.

'But fore-seeing these things, thou must do nothing rashly; but if thou shalt do any thing

ne-

‘negligently, take the Penalty of the Inconveni-
 ‘ence in thy own Hand; better so to suffer Loss
 ‘then otherwise. For, tell me, Thou halest a
 ‘man to an Oath; What dost thou seek? Wouldst
 ‘thou have him to Forswear? But this is ex-
 ‘tream Folly; for the Loss will turn upon
 ‘thy own Head: It were better to lose thy
 ‘Means, then that he should be lost; where-
 ‘fore thou dost this to thy own Dammage, and
 ‘to God’s Dishonour; such is the Soule of a Beast
 ‘and of a Wicked Man!

‘But I expect that he may not Forswear.

Object.

‘Therefore believe him Without an Oath
 ‘also.

‘But there are many, say they, who without an
 ‘Oath dare Defraud, who wish an Oath do not do it.

Object.

‘Thou deceivest thy self, O Man! A Man
 ‘who hath learn’d to Steal and to Wrong a man,
 ‘will also trample upon an Oath often: But if he
 ‘hath a Reverence in Swearing, much more in
 ‘doing Unjustly.

‘But thou wilt say, He suffers this unwillingly.

Object.

‘Therefore he is worthy of Excuse. But
 ‘what shall I say of Oaths of the Courts that
 ‘are left? for there thou canst say no such thing;
 ‘for there for Six Pence both Oaths and Perju-
 ‘ries are made: For, because a Thunder-Bolt doth
 ‘not come down from above, and all things are not over-
 ‘turned, thou standest, and WILT * BIND GOD:
 ‘Why? That thou mayst get Herbs and Shoes for a
 ‘small Price, thou callest him to witness. Do we
 ‘there-

* An Oath is
 a Binding of
 God for our
 Security.

A Pathetical
Censure of
Oaths, and
them that
use them e-
ven in Courts

‘therefore think we do not sin, because they are
‘not punished? This is the Lord’s Mercy, not
‘our Desert. Swear by thy own Child, swear
‘by thy self; say, *So let the Officer keep from my*
‘*Sides*: But thou art afraid of thy Sides; IS
‘GOD MORE VILE, more Contemptible
‘then thy Head? Say, *So may I not be blind?*
‘But Christ so spareth us, that he *FORBIDS US*
‘*TO SWEAR EVEN BY OUR OWN HEAD.*
‘But we do so despise the Glory of God, *that*
‘*he is drawn every where*: Ye know not what
‘God is, and with what a Mouth he ought to be
‘invoked. Moreover, when we speak of any
‘Virtuous Man, we say, *Wash thy Mouth, that so*
‘*thou mayst be heedful.* But now we vainly dis-
‘tract that Honourable Name, *which is a Name*
‘*above every Name, which is Wonderful in all the*
‘*Earth, which the Devils hearing do tremble at:*
‘OH MOST CONTEMPTIBLE CUS-
‘TOM WHICH HATH DONE THAT!
‘Lastly, If thou shalt impose on any a Necessi-
‘ty of Swearing in the holy House, how horri-
‘ble an Oath dost thou enjoin, if thou dost
‘so? Is it that we abuse that simply, *this not so?*
‘Ought not one even to Dread when God is na-
‘med? But even among the *Jews* this Name
‘was so Reverend, *that it was written on the Plate*
‘*of the Mitre, and none might bear those Letters of the*
‘*Name of God, but only the High Priest*: And now
‘also we so bear his Name tenderly. If it was
‘not lawful for all to Name God simply, how
‘great

With what
Tenderness
God’s Name
should be
used.

' great Audaciousness is it to call it in Witness?
 ' Tell me now, how great Madnes is it? Behold, I Chrysostom's
 ' say and † testify to you, amend those Court-Oaths, Boldness.
 ' and shew me all those that do not obey: Behold, He testifies
 ' even in your Presence I will command them that are our Mind.
 ' set apart for the Ministry, the House of Prayer, and
 ' admonish and shew, **THAT IT IS NOT LAW-**
 ' **FUL FOR ANY TO SWEAR, nor otherwise nei-**
 ' **ther.** Let him therefore be brought to me,
 ' whosoever he be, because these things also
 ' ought to be done before us, because ye are
 ' Children. † Oh Shame! for, it is Confusion † Mark the
 ' that ye have need to be instructed in some great Zeal
 ' things. Darest thou that art initiated of Chry est.
 ' touch the holy Table? But that is yet worse, in this place,
 ' thou which art initiated, darest thou touch the
 ' holy Table, and that which it is not lawful
 ' for all the Priests to touch, **AND SO SWEAR?**
 ' but being gone out, thou wouldst not touch the
 ' Head of thy Child; but touchest thou the Ta-
 ' ble, and dost not dread nor fear? Bring such
 ' to me, I will inflict a just Punishment; and
 ' with Joy will send both away with this Com-
 ' mandment, Do as you list, I * *Impose this Law,* * Men never
 ' **NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL:** What Hope is could plead
 ' there of Salvation, when you so contemn and despise Conscience
 ' all things? Hast thou therefore received Let for not be-
 ' ters and Badges that thou shouldst lose thy Soul? ing believed
 ' What so great thing hast thou gained, as that without an
 ' which thou hast lost? Hath he forsworn? Thou Oath; ma-
 ' hast lost both thy self and him: But hath he not ny have, to
 ' be credited
 For. without one.

'Forsworn? Even so thou hast lost, who hast driven him to transgress the Commandment. Let us

* This was *Chrysostom's* *Exhortation* *Now its said,* *How can we* *Trade with* *out an Oath?* *expel this Disease from the Soul: Let * us drive it now from the Court, and from all Merchants & Tradesmen's Shops. It was a greater Labour to us, do not you think, that Worldly things are corrected by the Transgressings of Divine Laws. But he doth not believe, saith he; for I have almost heard this of some, Unless I swear many Oaths they will not believe me: Thou art the Cause of these things, who swearest so promptly and easily. But if this were not, but it were manifest to all, that thou wouldst not swear, believe me, more Credit would be given to thy very BECK, then those who swear abundance of Oaths. Whom therefore do you more believe, me that do not swear, or them that do swear?*

Object. *'But, sayes he, thou art a Prince and a Bishop.*

'What then, if I shall shew thee, that it is not this only? Answer me in Truth now: If I had sworn alwayes, and at every season, what Priviledge would my Principality have? No, thou seest that it is not for this: What gainest thou then, tell me now? Paul Hungerd; and do thou chuse rather to Hunger then to transgress any of God's Commandments: Why art thou so Unbelieving? Shalt thou chuse to do, and to suffer all things, that thou mayst not swear, and shall not be Reward thee? But he

Our Doct- feeds daily Forswearers and great Swearers, and rine made an *will he give thee up to Famish, b cause thou hearken- Axiom by* *est to him? Let all men know, that NONE MAY* *Chrysostom.* *'SWEAR*

' *SWEAR THAT ARE OF THIS CONGRE-*
 ' *GATION; and hereby we may be assured, and by*
 ' *this Sign be distinguished from the Greeks and from*
 ' *all men, and not only by the Faith (or Christian*
 ' *Profession.) Let us have this Mark from heavenly*
 ' *things, that we may shine with it everywhere, as*
 ' *the King's Flock. We are now known by the*
 ' *Mouth and the Tongue, as the Barbarians, and*
 ' *they that know to speak Greek; for we are dis-*
 ' *cerned from the Barbarians by the Tongue. Tell*
 ' *me now, How are Parrets known? Is it not that*
 ' *they speak like Men? And we also may be known,*
 ' *if we speak like the Apostles, and speak as the Angels:*
 ' *For, if any one say, Swear, let him hear, that Christ*
 ' *hath commanded, EVEN NOT TO SWEAR:*
 ' *This sufficeth to bring in all Virtue. It is a cer-*
 ' *tain Gate of Godliness, a Way bringing on unto the*
 ' *Love of Wisdom (or Philosophy) It is a certain Ex-*
 ' *ercise (or Mastery) Let us keep these things, that*
 ' *we attain both present and future good things, by*
 ' *the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, to the*
 ' *Father, with the holy Spirit, be Glory, Dominion,*
 ' *Honour, now and forever and ever, Amen.*

' These Precepts were because of the Jewish
 ' Depravation; but those perfect ones, to despise
 ' and relinquish Riches, stand manfully, lay down
 ' thy Life for Preaching; despise all Earthly
 ' things; have nothing to do with this present
 ' Life; do good to them that unjustly afflict
 ' thee; if thou be defrauded, bless thou; if any
 ' slander thee, honour thou him; be over all
 ' things.

things: It was fit to hear these and such like things; But now we discourse concerning an Oath. And it is even as if when a man should come to Philosophy, he should draw him away from those his Teachers, and make him spell with Letters and Syllable.

Consider now, what a Confusion it would be for a man that hath a weighty Scrip, and a Staff, and a Gown to go to the Grammar-School with Boyes, and to learn the same things that they do; would it not be a Matter of much Laughter? but more from you; for there is not so great a Difference betwixt Philosophy and the Elements of Speech, as between the Jewish Masters, and Ours; but as much as is between Angels and Men. Tell me now, if any should call down an Angel from Heaven, and tell him, That he must stand and hear our Sermons, as if he must be thereby instructed, would it not be a ridiculous and confused thing? And if it were a ridiculous thing to be yet instructed by these; tell me now how great Condemnation, and how great Confusion were it, not to give Attention to those former? And how then is it not Confusion, that a Christian must be instructed, that he must not swear? But let us repress our Affections, that we be not more laught at. Let us now discourse concerning the Jewish Law to day: What is that, will he say? Do not use thy Mouth to Swear, nor be familiar with the Holy Name. Why? For as a Servant, if he be continually scourged, shall not be clear from Marks, so neither he that sweareth. Consider

'der the Wisdom of that Wise Man ; He said
 'not, *Do not use thy Mind, but thy Mouth* ; because
 'he knew it to be all of the Mouth, and which
 'is easily amended, &c. The Punishment here
 'that is opposed to it, tells us, that it is not *Per-*
 'jury, but *Swearing*, that is here to be removed ;
 'Therefore **TO SWEAR IS A SIN**. Ve-
 'rily the Soul is full of such Wounds and Scars.
 'But if thou swear because he doth not believe ; say
 'thou, Believe, or if thou wilt not, swear by thy
 'self ; and I do not say, that thou art contrary
 'to the Law-giver : Far be it ; for, saith he,
 'Let your Word be **YEA, YEA, and NAY,**
 'NAY ; that herein I may condescend to you, and
 'bring you to this, that I may free you from this Ty-
 'rannical Custom. Will you learn why they al-
 'lowed them of old to Swear, not to Forswear ?
 'It was because they swore by Idols : You must not
 'be confounded in these Laws, in which they
 'that were weak were conversant. For, if I now
 'take a Greek, I do not forthwith enjoyn him this ;
 'but now I admonish him, That Christ must be known :
 'But a Believer, and one who hath learned him, and
 'heard, if he should use the same Indulgence and Liber-
 'ty, as the Greek, What Profit and Advantage would
 'there be ?

'Christ hath made a Law, that **NONE**
 'SWEAR ; Tell me now what is done about
 'this Law, lest perchance coming again, as the **Hom. 10.**
 'Apostle saith, I do not spare. **P. 101.**

We hope none will dispute whether *Chrysostom* was a
 M 2 gainst

gainst *All Swearing*, or that he understood Christ's Doctrine as we do; yet no Body can Promise for them that endeavour to squeeze *Swearing* out of Christ's SWEAR NOT AT ALL. We have been the larger in this Authority, partly because he excellently disputes it; and partly, because our Case needs it; and lastly, to show *Christians* their Apostacy, that they may reform.

Jerom. Libr. Epistol. part 3. Tract. 2. Epist. 2. Of Obedience, Knowledge and Revenge.

I. II. 'Thou saidst, if I mistake not, *That on this Account thou mayst justly render Evil for Evil, and oughtest to swear with them that swear, because the Lord sometimes swore, and rendered Evil for Evil.*

'First, I know that all things are not fit for us, that are Servants, which are agreeable to the Master, &c. I know the Lord oftentimes swore, *who hath forbidden us to swear.* Nor must we rashly speak Evil of, or Blaspheme in this, that he forbid another what he did himself; because it may not be said, the Lord swore as Lord, whom none forbid to swear: It is not lawful for us as Servants to Swear, *because we are Forbidden by the Law of our Lord to Swear.* But lest we should suffer an Offence by his Example, since the time he forbid *Us* to Swear, neither did he himself ever Swear, &c.

God never
swore pro-
perly.

Upon Zachary, Book 2. Chap. 8.

'*And love ye not a False Oath*—As to the Lord's commanding in the Gospel, *But I say unto you, Swear not at all; but let your Word be YEA, YEA; NAY, NAY: He that shall Never Swear, can never*

' never Forswear : But he that sweareth, let
 ' him hear that which is written, *Thou shalt not*
 ' *take the Name of the Lord thy God in a vain thing ;*
 ' *for all these things I hate, saith the Lord, accord-*
 ' *ing to the words of Mal'achy, saying, And ye did*
 ' *all that I hate.* In Precepts which belong to
 ' Life, and are clear, we ought not to seek an
 ' Allegory, lest we seek a Knot in Rush, as sayes
 ' the Comick.

On *Jeremy* 4. Book 1. chap. 3.

' And thou shalt Swear the Lord liveth in Truth and
 Righteousness, and Judgment, &c.

' And how doth the Gospel forbid us to Swear?
 ' But here it is said for a Confession, thou shalt
 ' Swear, and for the Condemnation of Idols, by
 ' which *Israel* swore. Last'y, Offences are taken
 ' away, and he sweareth by the Lord ; and what An excellent
 ' is said in the Old Testament, *the Lord liveth*, is Reason why
 ' an Oath, to the condemning of all the Dead, by Oaths were
 ' whom all Idolatry sweareth. And it is also to permitted.
 ' be minded, that an Oath hath these Compani-
 ' ons, Truth, Judgment and Righteousness, if
 ' these be wanting, it is not Swearing, but For-
 ' swearing.

Also on *Matth.* Book 1. chap. 5.

' But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by
 Heaven, &c.

' The *Jews* had alwayes this Custom of Swea-
 ' ring by the Elements, as the Prophet's Speech
 ' often reproves them. He that sweareth, either
 ' reverenceh or loveth him by whom he swear-
 ' eth:

'eth. *In the Law it is commanded, that we must not swear but by the Lord our God.*

'The *Jews* Swearing by the *Angels*, and the *City Jerusalem*, and the *Temple*, and the *Elements*, did worship the Carnal Creatures with the Honour and Observance of God. *Lastly,

This be- tween the Two Stars seems a self-contradiction; but doubtless he intends it of the 2d Prohibition in a further Reason, why Oaths were permitted.

'consider, that here the Saviour forbade not to swear by God, but by Heaven, &c.* and this was allowed by the Law, as to little ones, that as they offered Sacrifices to God, lest they should sacrifice to Idols, so also they were suffered to Swear by God; *Not that they did this rightly*, but that it was better to yield that to God than to Devils. *But the Truth of the Gospel doth not receive an Oath, since every faithful Word is for an Oath.*

Those of after Times, that in some respect allow of an Oath, ground most upon the Authority of *Augustine*, as he from the larger acceptation of the Word *Swear* and *Oath*, which he extends to that which *Nazianzen* (as before) calls but a firm Faithfulness joyned to his words, which yet he will not admit of, but to a *Paul*, a Planter of Churches, speaking by the Spirit of God to them he had begotten in the Gospel, in Danger to be seduced by False Apostles, and to sleight him, and seek a Proof of Christ speaking in him, compelled by them to seem a Fool in glorying, and so driven, and no otherwise, to seem a Swearer too, yea, even to an *Augustine*, and so to compel him (even *Augustine*) to say, *It is a hard Question; I have alwayes avoided it.* But though he durst not condemn it altogether out of Reverence to the Apostle, which he thought used it, because of the Form of Speech; yet to shew that he did

did little encourage men to practise it, as any Act at all of the Worship of God, much less an *August Act*, He saith, *That False Swearing is Deadly; True Swearing, Dangerous; No-Swearing, Safe; God only Swears Safety, who cannot be deceived.*

Augustine de Sermone Domini, Serm. 28.

LIII. And *Augustine* himself confesseth, If men can't Swear safely, then it is more dangerous to swear then not to swear and it is better for People, nay, they are bound to refuse it.

‘That it was usual to alledge *Christianity* for not Swearing, bringing in one Saying, *It is not lawful for a Christian to Swear, when an Oath is required of him; I am a Christian; it is not lawful to swear.* And on *Psalm 88*, as allowing the Unlawfulness, he saith, ‘It is well that God hath forbidden men to Swear, lest by Custom of it (inasmuch as we are apt to Mistake) we commit Perjury. *There is none but God can * safely Swear,* &c.

And in that very Book, which is alledged for it, he saith, ‘*I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL, lest by Swearing ye come to a Facility of Swearing; from a Facility to a Custom; and from a Custom ye fall into Perjury.* But if any think that Book makes most for them, let them consider the Author hath retracted it; for what Cause let himself speak in the end of his Book of *Retractions*: For sure, that which we have here cited out of it, agreeth with his other Works, which contain much more to this Purpose.

de mendac. It is obscure & intricate.

‘Where

De Verb. *‘Where, sayes he, wouldst thou chuse to*
‘walk? Upon the Brink of a Precipice, or far
‘from it? I think far from it. So he which
‘swears, walks in the Border, and walketh with un-
‘sure Feet, because humane: If thou stumblest,
‘down thou goest; if thou fallest, down thou
‘goest.

* If it be. *‘goest.*
 longs to the We would fain know, if a most *August Aet* of God's
 Righteous- Worship be nighest the Pit's Brink, or farthest from it?
 nels of the for there all ought to chuse to walk; in whose Way they
 Kingdom of that walk, walk safely; their Place is sure, and their
 Heaven, Not Foot-steps shall not slide; but the Wicked's Feet are in
 to Swear, *slippery Places*; where *Augustine* says, Swearers walk.

then what Consider what he saith on those words of
 will become Christ in *Mat. 5.* ‘It is the Righteousness of the
 of those that *‘Pharisees, not to Forswear; This he confirmeth,*
 not only *‘who forbiddeth to swear, which * belongeth to the*
 break that *‘Righteousness of the Kingdom of Heaven: For, as*
 Command- *‘he which doth not speak, cannot speak a Lye;*
 ment of, *‘so he cannot Forswear, which doth not Swear.*
 Swear not at *‘He goes on to excuse Paul, and sayes, ‘That an*
 all, but teach *‘Oath is not among good things, but among † evil*
 men so to *‘things, and used for the Infirmary of others,*
 do? nay, pu- *‘which is Evil, from which we pray, that we*
 nish men for *‘may be daily delivered.*
 not obeying
 such Anti-
 Evangelical
 Doctrine.

† Then cer- But there is this to be said for *Augustine*, and some o-
 tainly they thers after him, that he and they write not clearer in a
 are to be re- Point so constantly maintained; His *Horizon* then was
 jected of over-casting apace. *Apostacy*, as a mighty Torrent,
 the true *Chr. st.* *Christian* Doctrine and Discipline; but like an Unruly
 and

and impetuous Sea brook down the Banks of Primitive Society, and made way for all sort of Superstition, worldly Interest & Fraud; that, to say *no more* than he did, was to incur, perhaps, the Censure of the *Grandeers* of his Age, who had joyn'd Earthly Policy to *Christian*-Religion, and cast off the Blessed Yoak of their Self-denying Lord, to swim in the Delicious Liberty of the World: A Time full of such Circumstances as seem'd to conspire the Return of *Oaths*, that were not dead, but retired only: For as men grew *False* and *Distrustful*, Truth became burdensom, and *Yea* and *Nay* no Security with them; and therefore declin'd, or rather exil'd them their Government; Old *Judaism* or *Gentilism* pleas'd them better. 'Twas harder Living that Watchful Life that was sufficient to credit a *Yea* or *Nay*, then to take an Oath, that dependeth upon the saying of so many Words only: This was considerable, and made Swearing then, and continues it grateful to our very Times. But sad it is, that *Oaths* rid thus in Sate, while *Integrity* went Barefoot, and Evangelical *Yea* and *Nay* turn'd off for a *Non-sufficient*, and that too, not without *Fines*, *Prisons*, and a great deal of *Reproach*. However, we must acknowledge, that the Gravity and *Christian* Care of this Person, and other his Contemporaries, appeared in not only dissuading, but deterring those Ages from the *Brink* (for so he calls *Swearing at all*) and turning their Faces after the *Woman*, now on her Flight into the *Wilderness*: During all which Time, the *Witnesses*, though fewest in Number, and mystically cloathed in *Sack-cloth*, forbore not to *prophecie* even in this Particular.

And we hope, having no certain Knowledge to the contrary, that most of them, at least that were Men fearing God, and serving him according to what they knew and in that Manner they were perswaded was most acceptable to him. And as *Irenaeus* said of the *Poets* and *Philosophers*, *These Men, every one seeing that which was connatural from Part of the Divine-sown-Reason, speak excellently, and*

where right and consistent with themselves, they are ours, Iren. lib. 5. cap. 18. So we sincerely declare of Men differing from us, that as we desire the Good of all, so we can own the Good in all, and the Truth in all, and receive it from them; though in other Respects our Adversaries; and would have all to do the like with us and each other: And howbeit our Adversaries may have hard Thoughts of some of the Persons our Matter leads us to instance, as Men interested in the Doctrine and Practices of those darker Times they lived in, and of us for making Use of such for Authorities; yet we hope they would also judge it an hard and very cruel Thing to repute them utter Cast-aways. And though we know that Men differ within themselves, and all of them more or less from the Truth, yet since there may be some Truth and Sincerity, we cannot but acknowledge and embrace: And we hope, the Reasons and Authorities of others they bring, and the Concessions and Confessions they make, may, and indeed ought to be of Weight in that Point, at least to shew, that it is no new, strange or unreasonable Thing for us to refuse Oaths. And though some might with a Mixture of Superstition and Will-worship, undertake and maintain that Strictness and Preciseness, which some of the holy Ancients by the Spirit of Truth were led to practise (the ancient Histories of whom, from Eye-Wit-

Euseb. Pam. nestes, as the Word signifies, of some of them, we in a *Socr. Schol.* great Part believe) And some later more *Enlightened* and *Evagr. &c.* Zealous Men, taking Offence thereat, but especially at the Hypocrisie and Abomination, palliated by such fair Pretences, have streined much in Opposition to that *Evangelical Doctrine*, yet is the Doctrine nevertheless a Truth in it self. Nor can we believe that all that were accounted *Hereticks*, were out of the *Catholic* or *Universal Church*; for the Word *Catholic* signifies *Universal*, containing all that are

1 *Thes. 1. 1.* in the Church (that is in God the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ) in all Times, and those were not all of the same *Phil. 3. 15.* Mind in all Things, as may be read in the Holy Scriptures, and also in *Eusebius* and other *Ecclesiastical Histories*, where

Men

Mén are commended for Holiness and Virtue, yet at much *See* l. 6. c. 12 Difference in some Things. *Synesius*, though he believed *Evagr.* l. 1. not the *Resurrection*, was chosen to minister, and after cap. 11. c. 9. ward was made a Bishop, the Charity of *Christians* was so great in that Age. And some accounted *Hereticks*, suffered Martyrdom, that are commended or excused by *Eusebius*; *Euseb.* Eccl. one in particular that dyed with *Polycarpus*, and another *Hil.* l. 8. c. 28. called *Asclepius*, called *Marcionites*. See also the begin. l. 4. c. 15. ning of his eighth Book concerning the *Divisions* among them that afterward suffered for the Testimony of the Universal or *Catholick Truth*; nor can we receive their Judgment, that branded those with the Name of *Hereticks*, *Pelagians*, &c. who denyed *Swearing* in these declining *Brittain*, *ages*, and suppressed their Works under that Name and *Asclepius* wrote person only; not allowing them to speak for themselves *Notable* to us of latter Times. *Books*, saith

We see how unjustly we our selves are aspersed in almost *Sennaida*, every Doctrine we hold, and that under Pretence of serving who lived God; particularly, with seeking to work our *Salvation* soon after by our own *Power*, and when they have made us this Belief, *him*. they bestow *Pelagianism* upon it (for Fathers have Right to name their own Children) whereas of all other People, we especially disclaim our own *Ability*, and wait to be renewed and guided by the Spirit of Christ, and to be found in his *Righteousness*, and therefore on the other hand reputed *Phanatics*, *Enthusiasts*, &c. and mocked for being moved by the Spirit, following the Light, &c. But let their Example or Authority be as it will, or however they were in other Respects, the Doctrine of the ancient *primitive* Fathers, and Practice of that Church, as also the Doctrine of famous Men among themselves, neither of which Sort dare they condemn for *Hereticks*, do sufficiently defend them from the Aspersions of *Heretic* in that Particular: And so we shall come to our remaining *Testimonies*, it being our Business, not to maintain every one of their *Principles* we cite; but this Doctrine of *Swear not at all*, to have had the Voice of several *Ages* to confirm it.

The ancient *Waldenses*, reputed to have continued *Uncorrupted* with the Grossness of the *Apostacy*, ever since the *Apostles Times* (see their History in *P. Perin, S. Moreland* and *Bp. Usher de Success.*) we have good Cause to say, denied the taking of any Oath in what Sense the *Primitive*

See *Baronius*, an. 1310. Sure, their Enemies charg'd them with it for above three hundred Years, and we cannot find they then denyed the against *John Wicklif* and *Waldenses*. Charge: We suppose none will attempt to prove they did; Though one of our *Adversaries* joyns with theirs, traducing them for *Perjurers*, and with them abuses that worthy and learned Man *Bp. Usher*, who defends them from that improbable and contradictory Aspersions, of *Lying and Forswearing*, and yet of *Denying to Swear*; who sayes, that they were as far from *Lying and Forswearing*, as their Enemies were from *Modesty and Truth*, which did appear in that they were charg'd by them, Not to swear at all: Peruse *Bp. Usher*, de Success.

de Juramentis, l. 1. c. 1, 2.

and where also you may read of their Succession, how that the *Syrians & Armenians* came out of the East into *Thracia*, thence in process of Time into *Bulgaria* and *Sclavonia*, thence into *Italy* and *Lumbardy*, and were called by several Names, of several People, or at several Times, as *Manichees*, *Waldenses*, *Albigenses*, *Cathari* or *Puritans*, *Patrins*, *Publicans*, *Humiliati*, &c. who were charged with denying *Swearing*; And how that several of the better sort of the *Clergy*, and of the nobler *Laitie* (who refused the present Use of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*) were burnt under the Name of *Manichees*. *Suarez* also reckons up the *Catharists*, *Alba. Bagnald*, and others which *Prateolus* and *Castro* relate, the *Waldenses*, the *Anabaptists*, &c. And which *Jansenius* also out of *Augustine*, Epist. 89. the *Pelagians* out of *Hilary Syracusanus*, Epist. 88. *Bernard* homil. 69. on Cant. The *Fathers*, sayes he, seem to favour this Opinion, especially *Basil*, hom. in *Psal. 14*. *Chrysostom* hom. 12. 78. ad popul. and 17. on *Mat* And *Theophylact* on *Mat. 5*. *Origen* Tract 35. *Mat*. *Tertullian* de *Idololat.* Clem.

Clem Rom. l. 6. *Constitut. Apost.* Maldonat on Mat. 5. 34. saith, the Anabaptists, the Wickliffists, some Syracusans, a kind of Pelagians, denyed Swearing, and that Origen was not far off that Opinion. Here the Hereticks, as accounted, and the Fathers are reckoned up together, as holding the same Opinions: Sure in this they were not Hereticks; for then the Fathers should be condemned with them, and called Hereticks too, as well as they, or else these Men are partial and contradictory.

On Jam. 5. of the words of the Apostle, thus, Ser. 30. 'Perhaps it is meet for the Lord
' alone to swear, who cannot forswear. And so he goes on to shew how hard it is for men to avoid Perjury.

In Serm. 3. *ad competentes*: 'Let them not on-
' ly abstain from Perjury, but from Swearing; be-
' cause he doth not Lye who saith, *A man Swear-*
' *ing much, shall not depart from Iniquity, and the*
' *Plague shall not depart from his House, Eccles. 23.*

But if it were an *August Act* of the Worship of God, he would on the contrary have exhorted at least, if not commanded them to swear, which we never read any Command for, but in Opposition to Idols; even in the time of the Old-Testament-Writings, as the Testimonies before alledged declare, and in the time of the New, no Command at all; but on the contrary, a Prohibition by the Lord himself, and another by his Apostle, nor any Example; for that of Paul's was but an Asseveration, as by the Testimonies already produced, and to be alledged appears: For besides those of the Fathers and other *Doctors*, of late Bp. Ro. Sander son in his *Oxford Lectures*, shows, that is sometimes used in the Form of an Oath which is no Oath; and so he defendeth Joseph from breaking God's Command, that is, not to have sworn so; and therefore not to have sinned, but to have

Agreeing
with Chry.
sostom.

have used an Affelevation, as if he had said, *as sure as Pharaoh liveth ye are Spyes*: So may Paul be defended against the breaking Christ's Command, as if he had said, *as sure as ye*, or as some Greek Copies have it, *We Rejoyce in Christ Jesus*: For *ναι*, which they translate, *I protest by*, hath sometimes the same signification that *ναι*, *yea*, hath, as may be seen in *Scapula*; For he sayes, *ναι* (translated, *I protest by*) is a Particle, sometimes of granting and affirming; sometimes it is put for *verily, indeed*; and he interprets *ναι* by the same word, which is translated *yea*, which *Scapula* saith, is also sometimes used in Swearing, and cites *Aristophanes* and *Xenophon* for it: And that *ναι* is used also in Composition, for affirming, as in *ναιχολος*, profusus, *lavishing*; which cannot signifie Swearing.

And how easily might the Transcriber, through that common Use, alter a Letter, being of the same signification, seeing in that very Verse, in some Copies, there is not only in another word an Alteration of a Letter *μετρεσαν* & *μετρεσαι*, *our* and *your*, but in another word five Letters, *αποστολος* & *αποστολος*, referring it to the Verse before; yea, a whole Word of Seven Letters added, *αμαρτιαν*. And of about Thirty Greek Copies there are not Two of them that agree, but they interfer, some in one place, some in another; insomuch that there are Thousands of various Readings, which many of the ancient Fathers diversely follow, some one, some another. See the (various Lectiōnes) *Varia Lectiōnes Græc. Nov. Test.* in Bp. Walton's *Polyglot*, vol. 6. also the *Preface* and *Beza's Epistle* therein: And consider how hard a thing it is to construe, limit, and lay the Interpretation of the Sayings of Christ and his Apostles, and the Weight of a Doctrine, and that as men would avoid Penalties too, upon a Letter (which yet alters not the Signification) upon Credit of the Transcribers, especially in Paul's Epistles, wherein Peter sayes, *many things are hard to be understood, and werested by the Unlearned*, which he must needs intend in such

Learning

Learning as he himself had, and that was not of *Worldly Academies*; but from the Holy Spirit. And these words, which are joyned with that Particle, are not such words as men use in Swearing, but for a Ground of his Fidelity, and a Remedy against their Incredulity, and questioning of the Weight of his Assertions, amongst whom other Teachers were preferred, and who compelled him to speak as a Fool, he says, *even to commend himself*. So that it is not strange, if to them, and not to other Churches, he used such forcible Affirmations from the Testimony that they had of him, of the Truth and Work of Christ in him, and the Record thereof upon his Soul, and his Joy therein, that he spake the Truth to them, and did not lye; so that he brings his Perfections against their Imperfections, to gain Belief, which can amount to no more then a Voluntary Condescension for the time being, and cannot prove or countenance a Compulsory, Promissory, Formal, Ceremonial Oath to be exacted or taken up for the future.

But Mark, that the word *Oath*, or *Swear*, used both by Christ and the Apostle *James* in their Prohibition, is never used by *Paul* in his Affirmations, neither doth he ever apply it to the Brethren; but speaking to them of the Oath that was in old time, and of men (indefinitely) that use to swear, he saith, *Men swear, and to them an Oath is for Confirmation*; that is, as among the Jews and Heathen; he doth not say to *Us*, or to *You*; or *We*, or *Ye* swear, who are not in Strife, which, if had that been true, it might have stood the present *Oath-Advocates* in stead: So that such as will have it, that *Paul* swore, must bring the word *swear*, or *Oath*, to prove it; But if they could, his Example then were not enough to invalidate to us now the Command of Christ, for the Abolishing of Swearing, no more then his *shaving* his Head at *Cenchrea*, because he had a Vow; or his *purifying* himself in the Temple, and *offering* with the four Jews that had a Vow; or his *circumcising* of *Timothy*, because of the Jews,

can warrant us to the Observation of those legal Rites and Ceremonies, which so long since are not only *dead*, but *deadly*, as the Fathers and Bp. *Sanderſon* diſtinguiſh about them. And thoſe that would therefore bring in *Swearing* and *Vows*, might under the ſame Colour, bring in *ſacrificing* and *circumciſing* too.

L. I. c. 15.

Ep. lib. 1.
Epiſt. 155.

LIV. *ISIDORUS PELUSIOTA*, who as *Eugrius Schol.* writes, lived at the ſame time with *Cyrrill*, and that the Fame of his Sayings and Doings was ſpread far and near, and ſite in every man's Mouth, *that He led on Earth the Life of an Angel*, and wrote many notable Works, amongſt which are his Epiſtles, in one whereof he writeth againſt *Swearing* thus; 'If thou art
' of our Flock, and art ordered under a good
' Shepherd, deny the Nature of Wild Beaſts,
' and obey his Voice *that Forbiddeth to Swear AT*
' *ALL*. Moreover not to Swear is, *not to require an*
' *Oath of another*: Now, if thou wilt not ſwear, nei-
' ther require thou an Oath of another, for two
' Cauſes; either becauſe he who is asked loves
' Truth, or on the contrary to Lye: If the man
' ſpeaks Truth uſually, *he will alwayes ſpeak Truth*
' *without an Oath*; but if he is a Liar, *he will Lye,*
' *though he Swear*: Therefore for both theſe Cau-
' ſes, *one ought not to require an Oath.*

Not to
require an
Oath by any
means of an-
other man.

On *Mat. 5.*

L V. *CHROMATIUS*, Biſhop of *Aquilais*, about or not long after that time, upon theſe words, *But I ſay unto you, Swear not at all*, paraphraſeth thus; 'The Law (ſaith he) given by
Moſes,

' Moses received a Growth, Proficiency or Per-
 ' fection by the Grace of the Doctrine of the
 ' Gospel. In the Law it was commanded, not
 ' to Forswear; *but in the Gospel NOT TO*
 ' SWEAR: Which very thing heretofore
 ' the Holy Ghost did premeditate that Solomon
 ' should command or teach, saying, *Let not thy*
 ' *Mouth use to Swear.* And again, As a Servant
 ' beaten continually, is not lessened from the
 ' Paleness of his Stripes; so every one that
 ' sweareth, shall not be purg'd from Sin. *Where-*
 ' *fore it is not meet for us to Swear AT ALL:* For,
 ' what need is there for any of us to Swear,
 ' seeing that it is not at all *LAWFUL FOR US*
 ' *TO LYE*; whose Words ought always to be so
 ' True, so *very Faithful*, that they may be accounted
 ' for Oaths. And therefore the Lord not only
 ' forbids us to Forswear, *BUT EVEN TO*
 ' SWEAR; that we may not seem to speak
 ' Truth *ONLY* when we swear; That we may
 ' not think that those whom he hath appointed
 ' to be True in all their Speech, may have Liber-
 ' ty to Lye without an Oath: For this is the
 ' Cause of an Oath, Because that every one who
 ' sweareth, doth swear to this End, that he will
 ' speak that which is true, and therefore the
 ' Lord would have no Difference to be *between*
 ' *their Oath and their Word:* Because as in an Oath
 ' there ought to be no *Perfidiousness*, so in our Words
 ' there ought to be no Lye, in that both Perjury and
 ' Lying is condemned by the Punishment of the
 ' Judg-

Suspicion,
 the Cause of
 an Oath.

Judgment of God, seeing the Scripture saith;
'The Month which Lyeth killeth the Soul: Therefore
'whosoever speaketh Truth, sweareth; be-
'cause it is written, A Faithful Witness doth not
'Lye. And therefore holy Scripture (not with-
'out Cause) often relates, that God hath sworn, be-
'cause whatsoever is spoken of God, who is
'true, and cannot lye, is counted for an Oath,
'because all which he speaks is true — Now
'we find God sometimes swearing, but it is for
'the Perfidiousness of the Jewish Infidelity, who
'think that all Truth consists in the Credit of
'an Oath; Therefore also God would swear, that
'they who would not trust God speaking, might
'trust him when he swore: Therefore our Lord
'saith, Ye have heard it said of old, Thou shalt not
'Forswear; But I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT
'ALL, &c.

On Deut. 6. LVI. THEODORET on Deut. 6. pag. 57.

Why doth the Law command. that they should
 A smart and swear by God? *Lest they should swear by false Gods:*
 true Answer. For he said the same by the Prophet, *If thou ta-*
kest the Names of Baalam out of thy Mouth, and
shalt swear, The Lord liveth with Truth: And here,
when he had said, Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God,
and him only shalt thou serve, and shalt cleave unto
him and shalt swear by his Name, he subjoynted,
Ye shall not walk after other or strange Gods, which
are of the Gods of the Nations, which are round a-
bout you, Lye saith the same.

LVI.

L VII. *Ordinary Gloss*, on *Mat. 5. 37.* hath *Rabanus.*
 this Sentence, ' *A Faithful Speech ought to be ac-*
 ' *counted for an Oath.*

L VIII. *Johannes Damascenus*, *Parallel.*
lib. 3. cap. 16. bringeth a Testimony of one
Nilus, against *Swearing*. There was one nam'd
NILUS in *Egypt*, a Martyr, mention'd by *Euse-*
bius. Another Bishop of *Constantinople*, spoa-
 ken of by *Socrates*, both very famous; the words
 are these: ' *It is not profitable to Swear, but very*
 ' *pernicious, and execrable and abominable: Where-*
 ' *fore hereafter make an End of Swearing; nor commit*
 ' *such a thing, as that thy Tongue use Oaths.* In the
 same place he alledgeth Testimonies out of *F.*
Chrysostom, *Hom. 13. ad Populum Antiochenum.* *Nilus for-*
bids Oaths.

L IX. *CYRILL*, whom *Evagrius Scholast.* *On Jer. 4.*
styles Renown'd, in his *Commentary* on *Jeremy*
 the 4th; *And shall swear, the Lord liveth in Truth,*
and in Judgment, and in Righteousness; saith, ' *Let*
 ' *us look, who swear, how we do not swear in*
 ' *Judgment, but without Judgment; so that our*
 ' *Oaths are by Custom rather then Judgment;*
 ' *we are lashed therefore, and the Word repro-*
 ' *ving that same thing, saith, and if he shall swear*
 ' *the Lord liveth in Truth, in Righteousness and Judg-*
 ' *ment: For we know it is said in the Gospel by*
 ' *the Lord unto his Disciples, But I say unto you, that*
 ' *you Swear NOT AT ALL.* But let us consider
 ' also this Saying, and if God grant, both shall
 O 2 ' be

'be rewarded: For, perhaps, it first behoveth
 'to swear in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righte-
 'ousness; and after one hath made Proficiency,
 'he may be made worthy NOT TO SWEAR
 'AT ALL, but may have YEA, not needing
 'Witnesses that IT IS SO; and may have NAY,
 'not needing Witnesses that IT IS VERILY NOT
 'So.

Cyril. See And sayes Cyril further, 'Let none because
 Catena. 65. 'he hears that God swore to Abraham, use to
 Grac. Patr. 'swear: For, as that which is called Wrath in
 on Luk. 1. p. 23. 'God, is not Wrath; nor doth it signifie a Passi-
 'on, but a Punishing Power, or some such like
 'Motion; so neither is Swearing SWEARING:
 'For, God doth not Swear; but shews the Certain-
 'ty, that what he saith shall come to pass, cer-
 'tainly: For the Oath of God is his own Word,
 'filling the Hearers, and making every one be-
 'lieve, that what he hath promised and said,
 'shall surely come to pass.

On Psal. 94. LX. CASSIODORUS, on Psalm 94. saith,
 'Hence it is, that men are forbidden to swear,
 agreeeth with 'because by their own Power they cannot per-
 Augustine. 'form their Promises, This Cassiodorus was Fa-
 mous about the year 500.

On Eccles. 8. LXI. OLYMPIODORUS was also Famous
 about the same time, who on Eccles. 8. saith thus,
 'Keep the Mouth of the King, and do not study
 'concerning the Word of the Oath of God, but
 'go

‘go far from the Face of it, viz. of an Oath;
 ‘that is, *Refrain and depart from it, and do not AT*
 ‘*ALL endure to take an Oath into thy Mouth.*

LXII. *ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS* was famous about that time, and liv’d with him they call d *St. Gregory*, who disliked the bringing in the Title of *Universal Bishop*, and also the Use of *Swearing*: his Words are these, ‘*Many are slow to believe which* Chap. 31.
 ‘*are moved at the Belief of the Word: But they do grie-*
 ‘*veously offend, who compel them to Swear that speak to*
 ‘*them.*

LXIII. *ANTIOCHUS* said to be a Man famous for Holiness & Learning, living in *Palestine* about the time of *Heraclius*, the Emperor, that was about the Year 614. In his *Pandects of Scripture*, *Hom. 62.* concerning *Swearing* saith thus in the *Greek* (which see; for the *Latine* Translation is in some things imperfect) ‘The old Law, as giving Laws to Chil-
 ‘dren, which for their Age were not capable of
 ‘more holy Doctrine, not unseasonably commands,
 ‘To Swear nothing to their Neighbour in Deceit;
 ‘But us our Lord and Saviour commandeth, NOT TO
 ‘SWEAR AT ALL, neither out of Season, nor in
 ‘Season; for he saith to us, Let your YEA be YEA,
 ‘and your NAY, NAY; for whatsoever is more, is
 ‘of the Evil.

And saith he to the first People of a Stiff Neck,
 ‘I commanded, Thou shalt not forswear, but shalt per-
 ‘form thy Vows unto the Lord, as to them that were
 Hard-

' Hard-hearted and Disobedient to me : But to you
 ' that believe in me, to whom I have given Power to be-
 ' come the Sons of God, that are born again of the holy Spi-
 ' rit, I command, NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL,
 ' neither little, nor great Oaths ; that a Difference
 ' may plainly appear who are Bastards, and who true Sons.
 ' Let us therefore, Dear Friends, fear him, who hath
 ' vouchsafed us so much Honour, even the Lord and
 ' Father, with all Fear, as sincere ingenuous Ser-
 ' vants let us keep his Commandments, NOT TO
 ' SWEAR AT ALL, lest he say as in *Iſa. 1.* I have
 ' nourish'd and brought up Children, and they have re-
 ' bell'd against me: Let's not be Sleighters and De-
 ' spisers of this Commandment of the Lord, for
 ' those things that are said and done without an Oath,
 ' are more credited by Men, and more pleasing to
 ' God.

*Beda in Ep.
 Jam. c. 5.*

LXIV. In the next Century, *BEDA*, an English
 man, the most famous of those Dayes, and styl'd
Venerable, in his Exposition upon these words, *Be-
 fore all things; my Brethren, swear not, &c.* saith,
 ' Because he desires entirely to draw out the dead-
 ' ly Poison of the Tongue in his Hearers, he forbade
 ' to detract or slander any man, or to judge his
 ' Neighbour, who forbade to grieve in Adversities,
 ' which are open Sins ; he adds this also (seeming
 light to some) ' that he may take away the Cu-
 ' stom of Swearing. For that this also is not to be
 ' esteem'd a light matter, plainly appears to them,
 ' that carefully consider that Sentence of the Lord,
 where

‘where he saith, *Of every idle Word that men shall speak, they shall give Account in the Day of Judgment.* [That ye fall not into Condemnation.] Therefore (saith he) ‘I restrain you from the Fault of Swearing, lest by Swearing frequently true things, ye fall sometimes also into Forswearing; but stand so far from the Vice of Forswearing, that you will not Swear needful, but by the greatest Necessity. But he also falls under the Judgment of Guilt, who although he never Forswear, yet sweareth true oftener than there is need; namely, he offends in the very Idleness of superfluous Speech, and he offendeth the Judge, which forbid both every unprofitable Word and OATH.

From this chief man among the *English* of that time, it is manifest that this was the Doctrine they then held, as further appears from *H. Spelman*, that learn'd *English* Knight, *Spelm. Brit.* in his Book of *Brittish Councils, Canons, &c.* in the *Excep. Council. p. tions* or *select Collections* of *Egbert*, Arch Bishop of *York*, 260. - Artic. 19. That no Priest whatsoever may swear an Oath, but let him speak all things simply, in Purity and Truth, And in the same Author and Council, Art. : 8. the chief of *Monasteries, Priests & Deacons* should say (without Swearing) when they were to purge and clear themselves, only thus, *I speak the Truth in Christ, I lye not.*

And in pag. 259. In *England*, at the Council of *Berghamsted* about the Year 750. Artic. 17. That a Bishop or a King's Word or Affirmation without an Oath is irrefragable.

This agrees with *Blasaris Canons* above mention'd. And at this Day in some Countries, as the *Electoral Arch-Bishops* in *Germany*, of *Colen, Mentz and Triers*, and many Noble Men in their Station, speak without an Oath, upon their Honour, &c.

Certainly

Certainly then it is much below the *Nobility* of true *Christians* in their *Spiritual Station to Swear*, as *Chrysostom* and the *Ancients* have well observ'd.

LXV. *HAIMO* lived about 840. who on the *Revelations* saith, 'That it's lawful only for
' *Men and Angels to swear; but to Men it is forbidden.*

On the *Re-*
velations, P.
196.

LXVI. *AMBROSIVS ANSBERTVS*, *Gallus*
Presbyter: 'Seeing the Lord cohibits the Faith-
' ful from every Oath, saying, *Swear not at all,*
' *neither by Heaven, &c. but let your Yeabe Yea, and*
' *your Nay, Nay;* what abound more then them
' is from the Evil: Who stretcheth out his Hand
' to Heaven, and sweareth by him that liveth
' forever, Are not his Sayings and Actings set for
' Examples for Believers to imitate? But only
' in that men are often deceived by an Oath; but
' he, who is the Truth, never is deceived; for
' he would not have prohibited men from an Oath
' if he had not known Sin to be in it: For, what
' do we understand to be figured by the Hand of
' the Angel, unless (as before noted) a Dispen-
' sation of Redemption of Mankind? For, his
' Hand is the Operation of our Salvation; al-
' though also, if it may be so said, the same Son
' be his Right-Hand, as when the Word of the
' Father speaketh, he sheweth that he is the
' Word of the Father.

LXVII.

LXVIII. *THEOPHYLACT*, Arch-Bishop of the *Bulgarians*, whom some place in the Ninth Century, others after; to be sure very Famous; being as it were their Apostle, in his Comment on *Mat. 5.* saith, 'To swear, or adjure more to Yea or Nay, is of the Devil. * He makes Oaths Jewish, at least in Opposition to Evangelical; because imperfect, & permitted to the Jews in Condescension.
'Moreover (sayes he) if thou shouldst say, *That the Law also given to Moses was evil, because it commandeth to swear*, Learn, that then it was not 'Evil to swear; but after Christ, it is Evil, as also to be circumcised; and in brief, whatsoever 'is * Jewish: For, it is convenient for a Child to suck, but not at all for a Man.

LXIX. *Barnard*, 'The Truth needs not 'an Oath. *De modo bene vivendi, Ser. 32. De perjurio.* 'A Faithful Word holds the Place of 'an Oath; as he cannot Lye who doth not Speak, 'so he cannot Forswear who doth not undertake 'to Swear: grounded on *Matthew 5.*

LXX. *PASCHALIUS RATBERTUS* on *Mat. 5.* *Ye have heard, &c.* 'In this place, as also every 'where in those things, the Perfection in Righteousness is renew'd; for by what every one swears, 'he either worships, loveth or fears it; Therefore 'by the Law, for the carnal People it was lawful 'to swear by God, and this was allow'd as to little 'Ones, that as they offer'd Sacrifices to God, lest 'they should offer them to Idols; so also it was permitted

‘mitted to them to swear by God: Not that they
 ‘did this well; but because it was better to give it
 ‘to God then to Devils.

LXXI. OTHO BRUNFELSIIUS on Mat. 5.
But let your Word be Yea, &c. ‘That is the Duty of
 ‘a Christian man, to be so sure in his Words, that
 ‘being Unsworn he surpass any Jew or Heathen,
 ‘swearing by all his holy Things, namely in these
 ‘bare Words only, *Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay*: Such Faith-
 ‘fulness & Constancy is commended in good men
 ‘by prophane Authors; Read *Seneca, Cicero, Vale-*
 ‘*rius Maximus.*

‘But thou wilt say, *I shall not be trusted, unless I*
 ‘*swear: Even so it is permitted by the Popes, to swear*
 ‘*good Words in a good Cause.* But such Distrust ought
 ‘not to reign in the Faithful: But if we trust not
 ‘Words, what should an Oath do? It is a Proverb,
 ‘*None is less trusted then he which shall often swear.*
 ‘Moreover, *Who gave Power to Popes, to break the*
 ‘*Command of God?*

LXXII. DRUTHMARUS on Math. 5. ‘Lest
 ‘the Jews should Swear by Idols Names, the Lord
 ‘suffered them to swear by his own Name.

‘— The Lord taught us Perfection, that
 ‘such Trust is to be among Christians, that there
 ‘should be no need to interpose the Name of God for
 ‘Witness.

LXXIII. FANSENIUS on Matth. 5. ‘If
 ‘all

‘ all *Christians* were such as they ought to be, in
 ‘ would certainly be *needless* both to require and
 ‘ take an Oath — I think this more *Christian*;
 ‘ and not to Swear at all, nor Compel to Swear, more
 ‘ *Spiritual* — Yea and Amen are the same, 2 Cor. 1.
 ‘ not Swearing, but Affirming: So Christ swore
 ‘ not.

See Bernard, Hom. 69. in Cant. *De more bene vivendi*, Serm. 32.

LXXIV. ALBERTUS MAGNUS, on Mat. 5.

‘ Swearing is by Indulgence.

Thomas Aquinas cites Rabanus on Mat. 5.

LXXV. Alex. de Ales citeth HUG. CARDINAL, saying, ‘ The Lord Forbad Swearing,

‘ lest any should desire to swear as a Good Thing, p. 3. q. 59.
 ‘ also that none might fall into Perjury.

LXXVI. REMIGIUS on Rom. 1. ‘ Who
 ‘ never Swears, never Forswears.

LXXVII. RUFFINUS on Psal. 14. ‘ Not
 ‘ to Swear at all is of Perfect Men.

See also Smaragdus on Mat. 5.

Titelmannus on Psal. 14.

Brugensis on Mat. 5.

Ludolphus Carthusianus, vita Christi, part. 2. cap. 12.

Rupertus, de operibus spiritus sancti, fol. 453.

Baptista Folengius, on Psal. 15.

Nic. Lyra and Ordinary Gloss on Mat. 5.

See Biblio-
theca vet. r.
Patrum.

LXXVIII. EUTHYMIUS ZAGABONUS,
on *Matth. 5. p. 43.* saith thus ; *Again, ye have*
heard, that it hath been said to them of old time,
Thou shalt not Forswear, &c. but I say unto you, Swear
not at all, &c. ' Now the old Law saith, Thou
' shalt not Forswear, but shalt offer to the Lord
' thine Oaths ; which he added that he might
' put Fear into the Swearer, that he should not
' Forswear, knowing that God, which knows
' all things, undertakes the Oath. [*But I say unto*
you, Swear not at all] For he that easily sweareth,
' sometimes perchance may Forswear, by the Cu-
' stom of Swearing ; but he that Swears by no
' means, will never Forswear. Besides, thou
' that swearest, so be thou do not Forswear, thou
' observest the Worship of God ; but Swear-
' ing by no means, thou dost promote it : And the
' other is the part of mean and imperfect Philo-
' sophy ; *but this of that which is the highest and perfect.*
' The other, *Thou shalt not Forswear,* is written in
' the Book of *Exodus* ; but this, *Thou shalt restore*
to the Lord thine Oaths, in the Book of *Deutero-*
my, but in other words : Now he commanded
' this, lest they should swear by Gods of a false
' Name. Again,

' Not to Swear, and not to require an Oath ;
' comes to the same thing : For, how canst thou
' induce thy Brother unto that, which thou avoi-
' dest thy self ; if so be that thou art a Lover of
' thy Brother, and not rather of Money ?

Nor

Nor by Heaven, for it is the Throne of God, &c.

‘Lest they should think, that he forbade to swear by God only, in saying, *By God*, he adds also other kind of Oaths, by which then the *Jews* did swear; for he that sweareth by these things, sweareth again by God, who fills these things, and rules them; for they have these things in Honour for him, and not for themselves; for he saith by the Prophet, *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Foot-stool*; the Prophet manifesting by this, that God filleth all things: *Do not I fill Heaven and Earth?* David also saith, *The City of the Great King.*

Neither by thy Head.

‘Therefore thou shouldst not swear the meanest Oath; I say, even by thy own Head, lest thou proceed to greater, or by any other manner; for the Creature is also the Possession of God; And again, the Oath is made by God, who hath it (the Creature) in his Power; for, although it (the Head) be made thine, yet it is not thy Work, which is manifest from this, That thou canst not make one Hair white or black.

But let your Words be Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay, &c.

‘Let your Speech be when ye affirm, *Yea*; and when ye deny, *Nay*; and use only these for, or instead of Oaths to Confirmation, and no other then *Yea* and *Nay*; what is adjoined besides these, he calleth an Oath.

Quest.

‘*Quest. But if an Oath be of the Devil, how did the old Law permit it?*

They all agree in the Reason of suffering Oathes under the Law, viz. the Jews Weakness.

‘*Answ. Because the Sacrifices of Living Creatures were also of Evil, and by the Deceit of Idols; yet the Law permitted them, because of the * Infirmity of the Hebrews: For, whereas they were Gluttons and Smell-Feasts, they lov’d the Sacrifices of Idols; and whereas also they were Unbelieving, they also loved an Oath: And that they should not afterwards either sacrifice to Idols, or swear by Idols, the Law permitted them to sacrifice and to swear, and if there were any thing else of that kind, they transferred all unto God. Now it was to come to pass, that in process of time, he would cut off these things also, by a more sublime Law to be brought in; because it is good for Infants to be suckled; but for men it is very unfit: There we allow this to them that live after the manner of Infants; but we withdraw or prohibit them that are manly from it.*

‘*Quest. What then is to be done, if any require an Oath, yea, compel to Swear?*

‘*Answ. Let the Fear of God be more forcible than this Compulsion or Necessity; and chuse rather to suffer all things, then to transgress the Command, sith in every Precept Force and Violent Danger will often meet with thee: And unless thou esteamest the Command of God every where more forcible, all things will depart from thee*

‘thee Void and Unperformed. In the following
 ‘Passages the Lord saith, *The Kingdom of Heaven*
 ‘*suffered Violence, and the Violent take it by Force.*

LXXIX. *OECUMENIUS*, a Famous Greek
 Writer; about *Ann. 1070.* writes on *Jam. 5. 12.*
 thus, ‘But some will say, *If any be forced to swear,*
 ‘*what is to be done?* We say, that the Fear of God
 ‘shall be stronger then the Force of him that
 ‘compels. But some may doubt, *How it comes*
 ‘*to pass, that Grace doth not command this, as did the*
 ‘*Old Law, affording Praise to him that did swear by*
 ‘*the Name of the Lord?* We say, The old Law
 ‘leading the *Jews not to swear by Devils*, appointed
 ‘to swear by God, as it commanded them to sa-
 ‘crifice, drawing them from the Sacrifice of Idols
 ‘or Devils: But when it had sufficiently taught
 ‘them to have a Religious Respect to God, then
 ‘it rejected Sacrifices as unprofitable, seeking
 ‘not a Sacrifice by Beasts, but a Broaken Spirit;
 ‘that is, a sweet whole Burnt-Sacrifice, enflamed
 ‘by the Fire of Love. That ye fall not into Hy-
 ‘pocrisie (so some Copies have it; for the words
 ‘in *Greek* are something alike) *Hypocrisie* he
 ‘saith, or Condemnation, which follows them
 ‘that Swear without sparing, and through the
 ‘Custom of Oaths are carryed out to Forswear.
 ‘The Word *Hypocrisie* signifies thus much, that
 ‘which being one thing appears another; How
 ‘then falleth he into Hypocrisie that sweareth?
 ‘*Ans.* When he that is believed for the Oath’s
 ‘sake

' sake to be true, and yet Transgression following,
 ' is declared to be a Liar, instead of a true Man,
 ' not producing *Yea* in Certainty. He forbids
 ' to swear by God, because of Perjury; but by
 ' Heaven and other Oaths, that men should not
 ' bring these things into the Honour of God; for
 ' all that swear, do swear by the Greater.

LXXX. *ANSHELMUS*, Bishop of *Can-*
terbury, about *Ann. 1090.* on that place of *Mat.*
 5. thus, pag. 38. *Thou shalt not Forswear, &c.*
 ' *Moses* seeing that he could not take away Swear-
 ' ing, takes away Perjury. And again, ' Because
 ' men have in great Reverence those things by
 ' which they swear, lest they should make the
 ' Creatures Gods to themselves, he commands
 ' them, *to render their Oaths to God, and not to swear*
 ' *by Creatures*: But the Lord removes them more
 ' perfectly from Perjury, *when he forbids them to*
 ' *Swear at all.*

Vid. *Baron.* LXXXI. The Ancient *WALDENSES*
 Anno 1310. we have good Cause to say, *Deny'd the taking of*
Job. Walden any Oath in what Sense the Primitive *Christians*
 adv. *Wicklif* and *Fathers* refused, and that was altogether: To
 & *Waldens.* be sure their Enemies charged them with it for
Reiner. Rub. above Three Hundred Years; and we cannot
Capitan. find, that they then deny'd the Charge: We
W. Woodford. suppose none will attempt to prove they did; for
 they were well known in the World as to this
 Particular.

LXXXII.

LXXXII. And Bp. *USHER* pleads for them, against the *Papists*, who were Swearers. De Success. l. 6.

LXXXIII. Likewise, a People of *Albi* in France, Ann. 1176. held, 'It was Unlawful to swear.' Ban. Anno 1310. n. 3.

LXXXIV. The *Plowman's Complaint*, containing, as abundance of mournful Applications to God, so many notable and serious Reprehensions of the Last, Erroneous and Cruel Nature of Men; among others it hath this notable Passage to our Purpose, 'Lord, thou givest us a Command of Truth, in bidding us say, *Yea, Yea*; and *Swear for Nothing*; but, Lord, he (Pope) that calls himself *thy Vicar on Earth*, hath broken the Commandment, so makes a Law to Command men to Swear. Who was the Author of this, is not certainly known; but to be sure it was embraced of the *Wickliffians*, as worthy of their Patronage; and remembred and recorded by *John Fox*, as not unworthy to keep Company with *Protestant Martyrs*. 7. Fox Mart. v. 1. p. 527. Men honoured by Protestants.

LXXXV. *JOHN WICKLIFF*, our Country-man, and in his time *Divinity-Professor* of *Oxford* (Famous for his Learning and Godly Courage in oppugning the Doctrines and Practices of *Rome*, in the time of *Edward the third*, and *Richard the second*, about the year 1370.) 7. Fox Mart. v. 1. p. 554. to 558.

* Q

was

was accused among other things, for maintaining, that all Oaths, which be made for any Contract or Civil Bargain betwixt man and man, are Unlawful.

L X X X V. I. We will bring in here a Passage out of the *Plowman's Tale*, as it lyeth in *GEFFRY CHAUCER's Works*, not impertinent to our Purpose; whose Learning, Honour and Wit was great in the time he lived, which was about 1360. *John Wickliff's* Contemporary.

Geff. Chauc.
Works, fol.
86.

‘ These Wollen make men to Swear,
‘ against Christ's Commandment;
‘ And Christ's Members all to tear,
‘ on rood as he were new yrent:
‘ Such Laws they maken by common Assent,
‘ each one it throweth as a Ball;
‘ Thus the Poor be full thent;
‘ but ever Falshood soul it besal.

He hath Expressions not less disliking Oaths in his *Parson's Tales*, where he makes the Parson to say, ‘ After those, then cometh Swearing, ‘ expressly against the Commandment of God, and our ‘ Lord Jesus Christ, who saith by St. Matthew's ‘ words, *Ne shall ye not Swear in all manner, or on* ‘ no Account.

J. Fox Mart.
v. 1. p. 614,
618.

L X X X V. II. *WILLIAM SWINDERBY*, Priest, and a Zealous Follower of *John Wickliff*, also lived in the time of *Richard the second*, as appears by his Appeal to that King, from the Unjust

Unjust Sentence of the Bishop of Hereford, in which, to this part of the Charge exhibited (*That no man ought to swear for any thing, but simply, without an Oath, to Affirm or Deny*) he answers thus, 'Whereas Christ's Law forbids Swearing, the 'Pope's Law justifieth Swearing, and compels men 'thereunto: Methinks (saith he) there is no 'need to Comfort or Encourage the People in 'Swearing.

LXXXVIII. *WALTER BRUTE*, also an early Dissenter from the Roman Church, and Intimate of *William Swinderby*; being charged, among other things, with saying, *That it is not Lawful for Christians, for any Cause to swear by the Creator, neither by the Creature*; thus answer'd for himself, and indeed, it comprehends much of our Belief in this Matter: 'As concerning *Oaths*, I believe 'and obey the Doctrine of Almighty God, and 'my Master, Jesus Christ, which teacheth, That 'Christian-men in Affirmation of a Truth should 'pass the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, the old Testament, or else he excludes 'them from the Kingdom of God: For Christ 'sayes, *Unless your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And as concerning *Oaths*, Christ saith, *It hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not Forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord those things that thou knowest: But I say unto you, Thou shalt not swear at* 7. Fox Mart.
v. 1. p. 623,
359.

'all, neither by Heaven, nor yet by the Earth, &c. but
 'let your Communication be Yea, Yea; and Nay, Nay;
 'for, whatsoever shall be more then this, proceedeth of
 'Evil: Therefore, as the Perfection of the an-
 'cient Men of the Old Testament was, Not to
 'Forswear themselves; so the Perfection of Chri-
 'stian Men is, Not to Swear at all, because we are
 'so commanded of Christ, whose Command-
 'ments must in no Case be broaken. Thus much
 of W. Brute.

J. Fox Mart.
 v. 1. p. 687.

LXXXIX. John Purrey, John Edward, John
 Becket, John Clements, Richard Herbert and Emmot
 Willie, with many more in the time of Henry the
 fourth, through Fears and Hopes deserted their
 Profession, and revolted (as John Fox tells us)
 from their Faith, which was the Religion then

* If they profess of those called Wickliffians or Lollards (the
 could not, it True, Poor, Persecuted Christians of that time)
 was then And of the Fifteen Articles, by them abjured,
 held none this was one; Item, That neither the * Pope,
 could; so nor the Prelate, neither any Ordinary can compel any
 that then it man to Swear by any Creature of God, or by the Bible-
 was denying all Tenders. Book.

Ibid. p. 701,
 702.

XC. WILLIAM THORPE, whom John
 Fox calls, The Constant and Blessed Servant of God,
 and good Man and Servant of Christ, &c. refused
 to swear upon a Bible, when the Arch-Bishop ren-
 dered the Oath to him; for, he thought it Not
 Lawful to take or give an Oath thereon, 'Because

' a Book is nothing else (sayes he) but divers
 ' Creatures, of which it is made; and such Swea-
 ' ring is ever Unlawful, as witnesseth *Chrysostom*
 ' plainly, *blaming them greatly, that bring out a Book*
 ' *to swear upon; charging Clerks, that in no wise they*
 ' *constrain any Body to swear well, when that thing is*
 ' *sooth (or true) that they swear for.* And also,
 ' full many Men and Women now say, *That it is*
 ' *well done to swear by God, and by our Lady, and by*
 ' *other Saints, to have them in mind;* others say,
 ' *That they may not swear, when they may otherwise*
 ' *be believed:* But since all these Sayings are Ex-
 ' cuses, and Sin, methinks, Sir (saith he) that
 ' this Sense of *Chrysostom* may be alledged well a-
 ' gainst all such Swearers.

X C I. ELIZABETH YOUNG, who was brought to Examination in the Marian-days, before the Catholick Inquisitors of Heretical Pravity, as they then called themselves, and commanded to Swear, this Language was used to her.

J. Fox Mart.
v. 3. p. 910,
911.

Dr. Martin, ' Thou shalt be racked *Inch-meal,*
 ' thou *Trayterly Whore* and Heretick; but thou
 ' shalt swear before a Judge before thou go.

Eliz. Young, ' Sir, *I understand not what an Oath*
 ' *is, and therefore I will take no such thing upon me.*

Dr. Martin, ' She refuseth to swear upon the
 ' four Evangelists before a Judge; for, I my self
 ' and Mr. Hussy, have had her before us Four
 ' Times, but we cannot bring her to swear.

Then

Then said the Bishop, 'Why wilt thou not swear before a Judge, &c ?

Eliz. Young, 'My Lord, I will not swear, that this Hand is mine.

'No, said the Bishop ; and why ?

Eliz. Young, 'Christ saith, That whatsoever is more then Yea, Yea ; or Nay, Nay, it cometh of Evil.

Then Dr. Cook brought her to a Book, commanding her to lay her Hand thereon.

Eliz. Young, 'No, my Lord, I will Not Swear. And so she persisted, till God delivered her out of their Hands.

John Huss, Jerom of Prague, Walter Brute, William Swinacby, William Sawtry, William White, William Thorpe, &c. are recorded by those of other Nations, both High and Low Dutch, to have refused all Swearing, as well by God, as by Creatures, in any Case, private or publick. Though such as admit of Oaths in some Cases, labour, as John Fox in England, and the Calvinists abroad, to eclipse and mutilate their Testimony ; as if they were one while only against Book-Swearing, as being a Creature ; another while, only against Swearing in Private Cases ; another while, as J. Fox relates in John Burrell, That it is not lawful to swear, but in Case of Life and Death, &c. But most evident it is, that they were against All Swearing, or Swearing at all ; else, why should they so frequently alledge Chrysostom, who, though he accounted swearing by Creatures a more execrable Sin, then to swear by God ; yet constantly counted Swearing at all, a Sin in Christians, as cleaving to that which Christ had abrogated, being only permitted to the Jews, for the Hardness
and

and Blindness of their Hearts, their Unbelief and Propensity to follow the Course of the *Heathens*, and swear by their Gods. Let it not be forgotten, that *Chrysostom* not only inveighs against them that bring forth the Book to swear by, because it is a Creature; but that he also upbraided them with Impudence and Audaciousness, that dare make use of that Law to administer an Oath by, *that so strictly forbids an Oath.*

Ridiculous it is, to make them deny Swearing only in private Cases, and to be ready to swear in Case of Life and Death: For where is there any Shadow of such a Law? And how should those Honest Men invent one? Christ's Law we read *Mat. 5.* The Doctors, *Chrysostom* and *Jerom's* Judgment, whom they had mostly in their Mouths, we have repeated here at large, in which is not the least Restriction. These Good Men then must needs be understood to take the Law of Christ either to have forbidden Swearing in any Case, and then not to swear in Case of Life; or not to forbid Swearing at all, and then they not only might swear to save their Lives, but Liberties and Estates, and ought so to do. But we hope there can be no room left for this Objection.

XCII. The LOLLARDS of *Kille in Scotland* were against all Swearing, as both *Spotswood* in his *Chronicle* doth relate, and the Book called, *The History of the Reformation of the Kirk of Scotland.* *Spotsf. Hist.*
pag. 61.

XCIII. MICHAEL SADLER (an Eminent Man, call'd a *Lord*) was Cruelly Tortur'd and put to death by some *Papists* under the Emperor of *Germany*, whose Brethren were also Executed *W.C. Albrid*
p. 193, 194
195.

executed with the Sword, and his Wife and Sisters Drowned, *Ann. 1527*. One Article alledged against him was, that he had said, *That men should not Swear to, or before the Magistrate.*

Morl. Hist. p. 217, 218. X C I V. The *CHRISTIAN-PROTESTANTS* in the Valley of *Piedmont*, who were Cruelly Tortured to Death by the *Papists*, about *Ann. 1655*. One Article alledged against them was, *That they believed it was not lawful to Swear anything, be it True or False.*

J. Fox Mart. v. 2. p. 420. X C V. *GERARD SAGARELD* of *Parma*, and his Followers, *Denied all Oaths and Vows*. So did several in *Germany*, mention'd by *B. Usher*, in his Book *De Successione*: 'In *Germany*, Jury and 'Swearing is well excluded, and need not much 'to be required.

Comm. on Mat. 5. X C V I. *ERASMUS*, 'Now ye shall 'hear another thing. Commandment was given 'unto your Elders, none otherwise; but if they 'had made an Oath, they should perform it, and 'not be Forsworn; for now they are bound to 'God, and not to man only: Wherefore among 'the *Jews* only Perjury is punishable; but he that 'deceives his Neighbour without any Oath made, 'he goes unpunished; but yet the Law of the 'Gospel condemneth him; the which, that ye 'may be the more remote from Perjury, doth ut-
'terly

'terly condemn all manner of Oaths; *that it is not*
 'lawful to Swear, *neither by God, nor by those things*
 'which seem to the Common Sort to be things of less
 'Religion, that is, *Neither by Heaven, because it is*
 'the Seat of God; *nor by the Earth, because it is his*
 'Foot-stool; *nor by Jerusalem, because it is the City*
 'of the Great King, that is to say, of him that
 'hath made all things: Neither as the *Heathen*
 'swear, by the *Head* of another Man, whereof
 'thou hast no Authority; but it is consecrate to
 'God, that hath made all things as he would;
 'for thou canst not make one White Hair Black,
 'nor the contrary: And because all things are
 'consecrate to God, the Maker, thou oughtest
 'to be fearful to swear by any thing. And what
 'needeth any Oath among them, *where no man,*
 '*because of their Simplicity, can distrust;* nor no
 'man can desire to deceive, though they might
 'do it: Such is their Sincerity and Perfectness,
 'specially in those things of the which they de-
 'clare themselves to be Despisers. Therefore
 'among you, *plain and simple Speech ought to be*
 '*more holy and more sure then the devout and solemn*
 'Oath among the Jews: For, among you, whose
 'Hearts and Mouths ought to agree, there is no
 'other use of Speech, but to express your
 'Minds each to other. In your Bargains ye
 'need no Oath, ye need no Execration, or Cur-
 'sing, or such like, to bind the Promiser, or to
 'assure him to whom the Promise is made: Two
 'Words be sufficient, *Nay and Yea,* whereby
 R * 'thou

‘thou denyest that which thou dost not promise;
 ‘and whereby thou dost perform that which thou
 ‘didst promise by plain Word, that thou wouldst
 ‘do: For, there is no man less bound by his
 ‘simple and bare Word, then the *Few* Swearing
 ‘by all holy Things; and he whom thou makest
 ‘thy Promise unto, doth trust thee as much as
 ‘if thou hadst made a solemn Oath. *If there be*

Erasm. here ‘any * more besides these, it must needs come of Evil
 ‘plainly for- ‘and Sin: For, he that sweareth, either he thinketh
 ‘biddeth all ‘Evil of him to whom he sweareth; or else, he that
 ‘Swearing on ‘requireth the Oath, doth distrust: But none of these
 ‘any account. ‘ought to be in you, whom I would have perfect in all
 ‘Points. Therefore, when I utterly forbid Swea-
 ‘ring, I do not abolish the Law which doth pro-
 ‘hibit Perjury; but I make the Law more full, and
 ‘I wish-draw men further from that, which the Law
 ‘doth punish.

‘Let your Mind be pure and plain, and let
 Comm. on ‘your Heart and your Mouth go both together:
 Jam. 5. ‘Let no man with feign’d words deceive his Neigh-
 ‘bour. But especially, my Brethren, Swear Not, lest by
 ‘little and little you accustom your selves to For-
 ‘swear. Among *Fews* and *Heathens*, for Fide-
 ‘lity’s sake, there is an Oath put; But among
 ‘Christians, which ought neither to distrust any man,
 ‘nor to deceive, it is a Vain Thing to Swear. Who-
 ‘soever is accustomed to Swear, is Cousen-ger-
 ‘man to the Peril of Forswearing. Be you afraid,
 ‘not only to Swear by God in humane Affairs,
 ‘and in light Matters, but also abstain from all kind
 ‘of

of Swearing, that you Swear neither by Heaven, nei-
 ther by Earth, or any other thing, that the Common
 People esteem for * Holy and Religious. Whoso-
 ever dare be bold to Lye without Swearing, he
 dare do the same also when he Swareth, if he
 list. To be brief: He that is a good man, will be-
 lieve a man without Swearing; and he that is naught,
 will not trust a man though he Swear: But among
 you that are furnished with Evangelical Plain-
 ness, there is neither place to distrust, nor to
 imagine Deceit; But let your Plain Communica-
 tion be regarded for no less True and Steadfast, then
 any manner of Oath of the Jews or Pagans, how holy
 soever it be. As often as you confirm any thing, con-
 firm it with all your Heart; and perform indeed the
 thing that you speak: As oft as you deny any thing,
 deny it with your whole Heart; neither let any thing
 else be in your Heart then your Mouth speaketh, that
 there be no Counterfeiting in you, seeing you are Dis-
 ciples of the Truth.

Then not by
 God; for the
 common pe-
 ople esteem-
 ed him fa-
 cred.

Thus far, we hope, is put altogether out of Questi-
 on, Whether many Learned and Christian Men have not
 flatly denied the Use of Oaths to True Christians: And
 though we need not the Contribution that is afforded us by
 several School and other Roman Doctors, yet to evidence
 a kind of Succession, and Universality of Testimony to
 this Doctrine, we think it not improper to mention some
 of them.

The Judgment of Shoolmen and others, in this Point.

Gloſs on CII. T. *AQUINAS*, *Non jurare omnino*,
Mat. 5. P &c. Not to ſwear at all, &c. 'The Lord had
 22. 'taught before, *Wrong is not to be done to our Neigh-*
 'bour, as in forbidding Anger with Murder, Luſt,
 'Adultery, putting away of one's Wife; and
 'now he teacheth conſequently, that we muſt
 'abſtain from the wronging of God, when he
 'doth not forbid only *Forſwearing*, as Evil, but
 'alſo an *Oath*, as the Occaſion of Evil, from
 'whence he ſaith, hear thou again, *For it was ſaid*
 'of old time, *Thou ſhalt not forſwear thyſelf*: and
 'leſt that they might make to themſelves the
 'Creatures Gods, he commandeth, *to render*
 'the Oaths to God, and not to ſwear by the Creatures;
 'from whence it follows, *Render to God, &c.* that
 'is, If one ſhall happen to ſwear by the Creator,
 'not by the Creature, whence he ſaith in *Deute-*
 'ronomy, *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and by his*
 'Name ſhalt ſwear; and this was allowed by the
 'Law, as to Children, that as they did offer Sa-
 'crifice to Idols, they ſhould not offer them to
 'Idols; ſo they were permitted to ſwear by God,
 'not that they might do this rightly, but that it
 'might be better to give this to God, them to
 'Devils. *Chryſoſtom* upon *Matthew*, *For no man*
 'ſweareth frequently that ſometimes may not forſwear;
 'as he that makes it a Cuſtom to ſpeak many things,
 'ſometimes he ſpeaks unſit things. *Auguſtine* againſt
 'Fauſtus, *The Lord was more willing that we not*
 'Swearing

'Swearing might come short of the Truth, then Swear-
 'ing the Truth, to come nearer to Perjury: Whence
 'it follows, I say unto you, Swear not at all. Au-
 'gustine on the Words of the Lord in the
 'Mountain, in which he confirms the Righte-
 'ousness of the Pharisees, which is, Not to For-
 'swear, For he cannot Forswear, that doth not
 Swear.

CIII. CAJETAN, Again, Ye have heard] On Mat. 5.

'He perfects another Precept of the Old Law fol. 18.

'concerning Perjury (because it was said to them
 'of old time, Thou shalt not Forswear) Exod. 20.

'Thou shalt not take the Name of thy God in vain:

'And Levit. 19. Thou shalt not Forswear in the

'Name of the Lord; but shalt render to the Lord thy

'Oaths. The first part of this Precept (namely,

'Thou shalt not Forswear) is negative, forbidding

'Evil in its kind; for Perjury is Evil of it self,

'therefore by no Reason it can be excused. But

'the second part (namely, Thou shalt render to the

'Lord thy Oaths) is affirmative, and doth not

'signifie to fulfil the Oaths which thou hast pro-

'mised (as it appears) and thereupon nothing

'follows of fulfilling of Promises) but it signi-

'fies, that the Oaths to God are to be rendred;

'that is, that Swearing must be by the Lord, not

'by the Creatures: For these words are not in the

'Law, but the Sense of them is, Deut. 6.

'Thou shalt swear by the Name of the Lord thy God:

'Where Swearing is not commanded, but is but

'regulated, that it should be by the Name of

God,

God, and not by the Name of the Creatures :
 For, the Law commandeth, that this Act of
 Religion, which is, *to swear*, should be exhibi-
 ted to God, and to no Creatures or Idols what-
 soever. *But I say unto you*] He perfecteth both
 the Precepts, adjoyning two Precepts ; the
 one negative, the other affirmative (*Not to*
swear at all) Lo a negative Precept, wherein two
 things are contained, that is, *Not to Swear*, and *Not*
at all; he forbids us to *Swear at all*, by all means, as
 well in expressing God, as not in expressing God;
 suppose by Heaven and Earth, and by the rest of
 the Creatures: And in this he perfects the Precept
 concerning not Forswearing, not only by ta-
 king away an Oath, but the Occasion of For-
 swearing ; for, 'tis impossible to incur For-
 swearing without an Oath: and also, the Pre-
 cept of performing the Oath to God, by taking
 away the Care of Performing ; for where no-
 thing is sworn, there is no need of any Care
 of performing the Oath to God.

Comm. on
 Mat. 5.

XCIX. ALPHONSUS *de Avendano*, 'It's to
 be noted out of *Cajetan*, that in this the Lord
 perfected the Command of not Forswearing, by
 taking away not only Forswearing, but the
 Occasion of not Forswearing ; because, with-
 out an Oath it is impossible to incur Perjury.
 An Oath was not necessary by the first Intenti-
 on of Nature ; for if men had continued in the
 Truth, they had not lyed ; and because Christ
 came, that he might bring back men to this first
 In-

‘ Innocency, an Oath was not necessary, suppo-
 ‘ sing that men ought to return unto it; then to
 ‘ men that live according to the Simplicity of the
 ‘ Gospel, an Oath is not necessary, and therefore
 ‘ not Good.

Reasons for avoiding Oaths, from the same Author.

‘ 1st, Left by Swearing they fall into Perjury;
 ‘ for which Cause Swearing is of an ill Report
 ‘ amongst the Saints, as in *Ambrose, Psalm 18.*

‘ 2^{dly}, For Reverence of the Name of God.

‘ 3^{dly}, For the mutual Confidence which one
 ‘ *Christian* should have of another, which ought
 ‘ to be so great, that every one should be sure, and
 ‘ not possible to be deceived in the least thing, al-
 ‘ though he should speak in a single Assertion;
 ‘ and for the Authority of the Saints, which do
 ‘ seem to forbid all Oaths to *Christians*, and that
 ‘ the Truth of the Gospel receives no Oath, as
 ‘ good and desirable of it self; seeing every
 ‘ one is of Evil.

‘ *Lastly*, Out of *Cajetan*, The Lord perfecteth
 ‘ this Precept of not Forswearing, by taking away
 ‘ not only Perjury, but the Occasion of it, and
 ‘ taking away the Care: For, where there is
 ‘ no Swearing, there is no need of Care of Ren-
 ‘ dering.

‘ Oh! how Sincere and True would the Lord
 ‘ make his *Christians*, that all Affirmations should
 ‘ be included in Three Letters only, all Denyals
 ‘ in other Three, that the Truth should be so fa-
 ‘ miliar to us, as to be included in the Compen-
 ‘ dium of Three Letters ?

C.

CVI. FRANCISCUS de MENDOCA Olyssiponensis Dr. Theol. in *Eburenf. Academia*, Sacralit. Interpres, in 4. lib. Reg. Tom. 3. *Speak*,
 On 1 King. 12. n.3. II. *saith he, of me, &c.* In the Hebrew it is נאמ
 'i. e. *testife*, from the verb נאמ, which not
 'only signifieth to *speak*, but also to *bear Testimony*,
 'as it is to be seen *Ex. 20. n. 14. Dent. 19. n. 15.*
 'Job 16. n. 9. *et passim alibi*, and many other places,
 'as if there were no Difference with the
 'Hebrews of *speaking* and *testifying*, nor without
 'Cause; for there ought to be so much Veracity
 'of Good Men, that their Simple Speech may
 'be accounted sworn, and their private Conference
 'be accounted a publick Testimony, which
 'was to be accounted the Fidelity of *Cato*, who was
 'believed in a Court-Case even *Unsworn*; which
 'also *S. Jerome*, in his Epistle to *Celantia*, inculcates;
 'Let there be, saith he, so much Love of Truth
 'in thee, that whatsoever thou sayest, thou mayst think to
 'be sworn. The same *Jerome* to that of *Mat. 5.*
 'Swear not, &c. The Gospel-Truth, saith he, doth
 'not receive an Oath, *for every Faithful Speech is for*
 'an Oath. To which Opinion is agreeable the
 'Doctrine of *Philo Alex.* in his Book of the Decalogue,
 'It will be most profitable, saith he, and
 'most agreeable to the rational Nature, to abstain Altogether
 'from Swearing; and be so accusom'd to Truth,
 'that one's single Word may have the Force of an Oath.
 'The like relateth *Iosephus*, in the second Book
 'of the Jewish War, cap. 7. *De his Esseni*, most
 sincere

' sincere Worshippers of Truth (*vericulatoribus.*)
 ' The Hebrew Elders also, when they would make
 ' their Innocency about the man kill'd by an
 ' Uncertain Author, testified with an Oath, as
 ' the Rabbins, Solomon and Moses in *Lyran.* affirm,
 ' *Deut. 21.* Nevertheless, they are brought in
 ' by the Scripture, asseverating it only with sim-
 ' ple Speech; And they shall say, saith he, *Our*
 ' *Hands have not shed this Blood, nor our Eyes seen it.*
 ' Because the simple and Naked Speech of a
 ' Wise Man, is equivalent to an Oath; which
 ' St. Bernard vehemently commendeth in *Comite*
 ' *Theobaldo*, in Epist. 38. to the same, *And indeed,*
 ' saith he, *in other Princes, if at any time we take a*
 ' *Word of Lightness or Falseness, we account it neither*
 ' *new nor wonderful:* But with Count *Theobald*, we
 ' do not at all patiently hear *Yea & Nay*, to whom,
 ' as it is said, *Simply to speak, is to Swear;* and
 ' a light *Lye* is accounted a heavy *Perjury*; for
 ' among very many Ensigns of Virtue, which do
 ' very much ennoble your Dignity, and make
 ' your Name Renowned and Famous throughout
 ' the World, the Constancy of Truth is especially
 ' praised in you. 3. Certainly God himself hath
 ' (*tantundem*) so much to speak nakedly, and to swear
 ' by himself holily: For that he promised with an
 ' Oath an Offspring to *David*, which should sit
 ' on his Throne, is read no where in the Scripture;
 ' And yet *Abner*, 2 *King. 3. n. 9.* acknowledges an
 ' Offspring sworn to *David*, *The Lord do so to Ab-*
 ' *ner*, saith he, *and add these things to him, unless*
 ' *as the Lord hath sworn to David, so I do with him.*

And in Psalm 88. God himself saith, *Once have*
I sworn in my Holiness, if I Lye to David, &c.
 Also the Land of *Canaan* is no where found in
 the holy Scriptures promised to the ancient Fa-
 thers with an Oath; but God promised it sim-
 ply to *Abraham*, Gen. 12, 13, & 17. to *Isaac*, Gen.
 26. to *Jacob*, Gen. 28. Yet *Moses*, in *Deut.* 1.
 Possess, saith he, *the Land, for which the Lord swore*
to your Fathers. Philo Alex. in the Book of *Abra-*
ham, at the end looses the Knot notably; *That*
therefore the simple Promise of God in those places
is called an Oath, because it hath the Force of an
Oath.

On *Mat.* 5.
 p. 23, 24.

C. I. *JACOBUS FABER*, 'It is the part of
 a Spiritual Man, not only Not to Swear in a
 Vain Thing, but also not in any Serious thing;
 for, you which are such, are true: Unto true
 men it's sufficient that a true man gain Belief, if
 he say, that the Lord hath commanded *Yea, Yea,*
 in Affirming; *Nay, Nay,* in Denying: But if
 with incredulous and Evil men a Speech also be
 had concerning a serious and necessary Matter,
 why shall one Swear for their Badness, that he
 may gain Belief with them? Who ever spake
 more seriously then our Saviour? Who more
 necessary things? Yet he never used other
 Speech then that, *Verely, verely, I say unto you,*
 or some other such like, which was a true Form
 or Manner to them, that swore not. Therefore
 that now some Swear, to gain Belief concerning
 some profitable and necessary things, which
 they

' they think is to be given rather to the Oath
 ' then to the Person : Perhaps also there is a
 ' Danger when an Oath is required in Judgment,
 ' lest he that exacteth it, sin ; For if it be manifest,
 ' that he that is called into Judgment be verely
 ' good and true, it is enough to hear of him *Yea*
 ' or *Nay* ; but if that be not evident, or that it
 ' be evident, that he is bad, perhaps that's re-
 ' quired of him which ought not to be required.
 ' What then ? It is lawful to Adjure : For the
 ' Lord made Answer to an Adjuration, but he did
 ' not Swear ; and Adjurations are found in the
 ' New Law : But if any one being Adjured of
 ' another, speak the Truth, by answering *Yea*
 ' or *Nay*, or by declaring the thing requir'd, neither
 ' the one nor the other offendeth ; but if he speak
 ' a Falsity, he offends, and incurs the Offence of
 ' a False Testimony, but perchance he sinneth
 ' less then if by Swearing he had also fallen into
 ' the Guilt of Perjury : For, as he that (being
 ' adjured) answereth in Truth, doth not Swear ;
 ' so he that answereth in Falseness, doth not For-
 ' swear, but he is a False Witness : but he also
 ' who hath adjured, is altogether guiltless ; for,
 ' there is no doubt but he hath required that
 ' which was lawful to require. And although
 ' its not my Purpose to contradict the Ordinances
 ' of Judgments, yet I may think this to be more
 ' *Christian*, both *Not to Swear at all*, neither to
 ' *Compel to Swear*, to be more Spiritual : But yet,
 ' if the Badness of men would permit it, although

‘you would have this Sentence of the Lord concerning *not Swearing*, to be applyed to the Believers common and daily Custom of speaking (for he speaks to his Disciples) which is very true, especially if the old Law, which the Lord declares, *Thou shalt not Forswear, but shalt render to the Lord thine Oaths*, was given concerning common and daily Speech; but afterwards the Lord ameneth another thing, which was written in the Old Law, that the Law might be perfect, and that he might shew how he hath fulfilled it; and it may be fulfilled of others, as *Matthew* shews.

De quæst.
jur. Christ.
p. 306.

C I I. *SUAREZ*: He affirmeth, Christ did not Swear, because that which he could not lawfully do, he could not simply do; but he could not lawfully swear, therefore he could not at all: But that he never swore, is proved, because that he himself commanded or counselled, *Not to swear at all*; but simply to speak, *Yea, it is; Nay, it is not, &c.* therefore ought to go before the Example. It is spoken of him only sometimes that he said *Amen*, or *Truly* or *Verily*, which we have before shewed to be no Particle of Swearing.

‘It’s not only forbidden in the New, but also in the Old Testaments, *Not to Swear*, as *Hos. 4. Zach. 5.* quoteth *Tertullian*, lib. *de Idololat.* cap. 11. saying, *I am silent about Perjury, seeing that indeed it is not lawful to Swear.*

pag. 227.

‘And those very words of Christ, *Swear not at all*

* *all*, signifie this (seeing he subjoyns, *Neither by*
 * *Heaven, &c.*) as if he had said, not only grea-
 * ter Oaths, but also these, which seem less, you
 * are to take heed of, and it is apparent from the
 * Reason which he adjoyns, saying, *Neither by*
 * *Heaven*: If therefore Christ forbiddeth to swear
 * by Heaven, because God dwells therein, much
 * more he forbiddeth to swear by God, &c. Now
 * he forbiddeth all manner of Swearing by the *Hom. 18. in*
 * Creatures, and every Oath by God himself, *Cant.*
 * as *Greg. Nyssen* rightly argues, and Christ him-
 * self hath plainly so declared, *Mat. 23.*

* *Lastly*, The following Words of Christ are
 * opposit, *Let your Word be Yea and Nay*; for, by
 * them he declareth, that he before forbad the
 * Addition of any Oath. 2dly, *Ferome* answers,
 * *Swearing was permitted to the Jews, as to Children*;
 * *but Evangelical Verity receives not Swearing, seeing*
 * *every Faithful Word is for an Oath.* The same Do-
 * ctrine and Exposition doth *Chrysostom* follow.
 * *Theophylact*, after Christ, *It is an Evil to Swear,*
 * *as to be Circumcised, and in brief, whatsoever is*
 * *Jewish.* *Beda*, also *Castro* and *Druthmarus* confess,
 * and *Bernard* himself denies not, that it is the
 * Counsel of Christ, *not to Swear.* And Precepts
 * are not contray to Counsels.

* *Libr. 1. cap. 14. p. 282. Whether an Oath be*
 * *an elicit Act of Religious Virtue*

* There may be a Reason of Doubting, be-
 * cause every Act of Religion is Principally in-
 * tended for the Worship of God: But an Oath
 * is

‘ is not made primarily, and of it self (*per se*) for the
 ‘ Worship of God ; but for confirming, &c. as
 ‘ *Heb. 6.* From whence it seems plainly to follow,
 ‘ That an *Oath* is not an Act of Religion.

pag. 276.

‘ It may be declared by Reason ; because,
 ‘ 1st, It is impossible that man can bring God
 ‘ for a Witness ; although he would never so fain :
 ‘ Therefore the Name of God is taken in vain,
 ‘ as often as it is taken to swear ; Therefore it is
 ‘ Evil in it self (*per se*.)

‘ 2^{dly}, Grant this were possible, to bring God
 ‘ for a Witness ; it seems disorderly to bring the
 ‘ Person of God to confirm men’s Busineses,
 ‘ Covenants, or Words, because it is disorderly to
 ‘ order things of an higher Order to those that are
 ‘ inferiour : Much more is it disorderly, to mix
 ‘ the sacred Authority of God to the prophane
 ‘ (or common) Words, and Busineses of Men.

‘ 3^{dly}, Though in some Case an Oath might
 ‘ be used without Inconvenience, yet it is so
 ‘ exposed to Dangers, that it can scarce be
 ‘ done without Crime : But in the Law of Grace,
 ‘ because of the Perfection of it, not only Sins
 ‘ are to be forbid, but also those things which do
 ‘ morally and nearest entangle into Sin : For he
 ‘ that loveth Danger, shall perish in it. He
 ‘ quotes *Clemens Romanus*, lib. 6. *Constitut. Apost.*
 ‘ as before ; Our Master commanded, that we should
 ‘ not Swear, no, not by the true God ; that our Word should
 ‘ be counted more firm and credible then an Oath it self.
 ‘ He quotes also *Greg. Nazianzen*, as before, upon these

Const. 6.
 & 11.

these words, *But I say unto you, &c.*] He forbiddeth all manner of Swearing by the Creatures, even with Respect to God: Hence it follows from the forcibler, as I said, that he forbid all Swearing by God himself, as *Gregory Nazianzen* rightly argues, as before, on *Cant. Homil. 18.* And Christ himself plainly so declared, *Mat. 23.* *He that Swareth by Heaven, Swareth by the Throne of God, &c.*

‘Lastly, The words withstand, which Christ ‘subjoyns, *Let your Word be, &c.*] For, by them ‘he declares, that he had before forbidden the ‘adding of any Oath: Therefore *Jerome* answered, *That Oaths, &c. were permitted to the Jews, as to Children.*

He uses many other Arguments, and quotes many Authors, as may be seen at large in his Book concerning Swearing.

CIII. *JO. MAJOR HADINGTONIANI*, on *Mat. 5.* *Not to Swear at all:* ‘That Precept was given to the Disciples (the Basis) of the ‘first Church.

CIV. *JOAC. CAMER.* and *P. LOSELER VILLERIUS*’s Marginal Note upon *Mat. 5. 37.* ‘Whatsoever you vouch, vouch it barely; and ‘whatsoever you deny, deny it barely, without ‘any more words.

CV. *Bible*, imprinted *An. 1559.* in Quarto. *What is more is of Evil*] Marginal Note, ‘From ‘an evil Conscience, or from the Devil.

CVI.

CVI. MARLORAT on *Mat. 5.* faith, 'Some men, *not bad*, hold against Swearing.

Maldonat on *Mat. 5.* reckons up several against Swearing.

CVII. PETER CHARRON, Doctor of Law in *Paris*, in his Book of Wisdom, chap. 37. 'An Oath, what is it, but a Symptom and shameful Mark of Distrust, Infidelity, Ignorance, Humane Infirmary, *both in him that Requires it, that Gives it, that Ordains it* (alluding to Christ's Words, faith he) *Quod amplius est a malo*; 'What is more, is from the Devil.

CVIII. BEZA, on *James 5. 12.* 'That which you have to say or affirm, speak or affirm it *simply*, and *without an Oath*; and that you have to deny, deny it *simply* and *flatly*.

CIX. Folio Bible, printed *Ann. 1578.* Marginal Note on *Mat. 5. 34.* *swear not at all*, 'Let Simplicity and Truth be your Words, and then you shall not be so light, and ready to Swear.

Comm. on
1 Tim. I. pag.
210.

CX. LODOVICUS SOTO Major, 'In the Gospel, this Particle (*Amen*) is often used by Christ our Lord, confirming his Words by it, as *Hierom* al- so noteth; yet it's not to be thought (that none
' be

' be deceived) that Christ our Lord *swore*, or
 ' would have to *swear*, as often as he useth this
 ' Word, or Form of Confirming; but rather so to
 ' have been willing, more to *Confirm*, and *Perswade*,
 ' and *Commend* those Things which he taught, and
 ' especially, by *Reiterating* or *Repeating* this Word,
 ' as he often useth; for neither in this doubling of
 ' the Word, for nought that Christ our Lord some-
 ' times useth it in the Gospel, but rather it hath a
 ' great *Emphasis* & *Encrease*, that is, great *Moment*
 ' and *Weight* to *perswade* and gain *Belief*, as *Augu-*
 ' *stine* rightly teacheth and explaineth in his 41.
 ' *Tract* upon the Gospel of *John*, expounding those
 ' Words of Christ, saying, *Amen*, or *verely*, *vere-*
 ' *ly*, *I say to you*, *He that doth Sin, is the Servant of Sin*:
 ' although therefore that it be not a *swearing*, yet it
 ' is a certain greater *Confirmation* and *Asseveration*
 ' of those Things which are spoken; yet never-
 ' theless it is not *Swearing*; for otherwise, is it
 ' likely that Christ the Lord, who himself *deports*
 ' others from *swearing* at all, for *Danger* of *For-*
 ' *swearing*, should himself *swear* so often? for he
 ' not only *forbad* his to *swear*, *Mat. 5.* but alio at
 ' the same Time, and that very wholiomly, that
 ' they should only use in their Speech a simple *Af-*
 ' *firmation* and *Denyal*, without any *Oath*, saying,
 ' *Swear NOT* at all, &c. for this much more becomes
 ' the *Simplicity*, *Sincerity*, *Piety* and *Modesty* of *Chri-*
 ' *stians*; for nothing is more Simple, Brief and
 ' Effectual to *perswade* (the *Badness* and *Naugh-*
 ' *tiness* of Men being removed) then a *single Af-*

T
firmation

* *firmation* or *Denyal*, although there were no Danger
* of *Perjury*.

In this Sense in a Manner, do mostly all the graver Authors interpret that Place of the Gospel, or Command of Christ, of *Not Swearing at all*; but especially *Augustine* lib. 4. of the Lord's Words in the Mount, Cap 30. and 31. and in his Book *de Mendacio*, cap 15. and *Epist.* 154. to *Publicola*, and often else-where; For which Interpretation or Understanding votes also *Philo Judæus* in his Book of the *Decalogue*, Tom. 2. p. 129. where treating of an Oath, he thus congruently writeth; *Mou sin in this Respect many and divers Wayes, therefore it will be most profitable and most agreeable to the Reasonable Nature, to abstain AL-TOGETHER from Swearing, and so to accustom to Truth, that simple Speech may have the Force of an Oath, &c.* Which Things *Philo* in the same Place pursues to the same Sense, very congruently in the Gospel, that which also he confirms in his Book of *Special Laws*, Tom. 2. pag. 137. And afterwards, *If therefore, as I said before, Christ the Lord for the Danger of Perjury, and also for the Reverence or Religion of an Oath, commands his NOT to Swear at all, though otherwise, it be true which they affirm; If I say, there be so much Reverence of an Oath, how great is the Perfection? It is not likely nor agreeable to Reason, that the Lord Christ, the Patron of true and solid Virtue, every Action of whom is our Instruction, did Swear so often, that is, should swear as often as he usid this Form, Verely, verely, I say unto you, &c. For how can every moral Action of his, or in his Conversation, be our Instruction or Example, if he so frequently and every where seems to do that, which he so vehemently and earnestly commanded his, even his chosen Disciples, that is, his Apostles, that they should not do it at all? Yet Augustine in his Book of the Apostles Words, Ser. 30. seems by his Authority to create some Scruple and Ado for us, inasmuch as he seems to censure and say, That it is a kind of Perjury when any wittingly & willingly (that is, with certain*

certain Reason and Will, or of set Purpose) *useth this Word VERELY, to confirm any Thing:* Yet if we diligently mark and weigh the Words of St. *Augustine* there, he intends no other then what we intend, acknowledge and confess, and is necessarily to be confessed, namely, that he which from a *false Opinion* and *Perswasion*, and an *Erroneous Conscience*, as *Divines* call it, thinketh and believeth that he *Swæreth* in very Deed in using this Word, as if this Word were an Adverb of *Swearing*, that sometimes he happens in a Manner to *Forswear*, if that which he affirms in this Manner be *false*; yet this is accidentary and adventitious, namely, by the Intention of him that *swæreth* of his own *Will*, or rather *Error* or *Ignorance*, and not by the Force and Propriety of the Word *Amen* or *Verely*, seeing, as we have said even now, that it is not a Word or Note of *Swearing*, but rather of confirming, as we confess: and the same St. *Augustine* teacheth else-where, but especially in *Traict 4.* on the Gospel of *John*, on those Words of Christ the Lord, *Verely, verely, &c.* where *Augustine* moderating his Words, saith thus, '*Verely, verely, is, if we may so say, in a certain Manner, a Swearing of Christ.*' Now these Words of *Augustine* are to be weighed; he dealeth not simply, but with an Additament and Caution, *Verely, verely, to be* (if it be lawful to say it) after a Manner a *Swearing* of Christ; for so he declares plain enough, that *Verely, verely*, is not properly *swearing*, or a Note of *swearing*, but only improperly, and after a certain Manner, viz. So far forth as Christ the Lord doth familiarly use this Word as *Swearing*, although in very Deed, and properly it be not an Adverb of *Swearing*, but rather affirming and asserting simply and in good Faith, to gain a better *Perswasion* of the *Matter* or *Doctrine*; for Christ never seems to have *Sworn*, if we will speak truly and properly of *Swearing*, but alwayes us'd a simple Speech though sometimes by *amplificationem*, he hath used this, even repeated, I say, for the greater *Perswasion* of his Heavenly Doctrine, that by this Means he might give his an Example

of *Not Swearing* rashly and every where, as we have already said, to whom he plainly commanded, saying, *Swear not at all, &c. but, &c.* so great is the Religion of *Swearing*, and the Danger of *Forswearing*.

The Approbation and Commendation of the Doctors of Paris.

We have carefully read these Commentaries on the Epistles of St Paul, and Timothy, and Titus, wherein the most Learned Author, according to the great Learning wherein he excels, largely and elegantly opens the more hidden Senses of the Apostle; and we have thought them worthy to be printed for publick Profit, A. C. Par. 16. Feb. 1610. F. Cocff. F. J. Tourn, &c.

Lindenbrog.
Cod. leg. antiquar.

CXI. *LODOVICUS PIUS* Emperor, who in his Prologue saith, That from his Youth, by Christ's Inspiration, he had the Desire of the Worship of God, Capitulum. Addit. 4. Tit. 96. Of not Swearing: 'That every one beware of Swearing; because Forswearers as also Adulterers, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Ibid.

CXII. King *LUITPRANDUS*; The Law of the Lombards, Tit. 28. Law 2. 'If he that enquires concerning Theft, believe not the Witnesses, the Witnesses may confirm it with an Oath, except they be such Persons as the King or Judge may trust without an Oath.

Ibid.

CXIII. The Emperor *LOTHARIUS*, Of the Law of the Lombards, Tit. 3. Law 10. 'Of those that enforce Payment of Tythes, we will not have them

‘to be constrain’d with an OATH, for Fear of For-
 ‘swearing.

CXIV. Of the Law of the *VISOGOTHS*, L. 2. Tit. Ibid.

1. Law 23. which was ancient: ‘*Let none come easily*
 ‘*to an Oath: For the true Search of Justice rather com-*
 ‘*mendeth this, that the Scriptures in all things may in-*
 ‘*tercur, and the Necessity of Swearing may altoge-*
 ‘*ther suspend it self.*

Thus much against *Swearing* from several Roman Doctors
 and others.

We shall in the next Place produce the Judgment of
 those Men, who run not so high in their Censure of *Oaths*,
 as the Persons that we have hitherto cited, but that believe
 it is not unlawful in any Case to take an *Oath*, and from
 them we doubt not to make appear, that it is best *Not to*
swear at all; so far are they from pleading for *Swearing*,
 or punish those that conscientiously refuse it.

CXV. *WILLIAM TINDAL* saith, ‘Our
 ‘Dealing ought to be so substantial, that our
 ‘Words might be believed without an Oath: Our
 ‘Words are the Signs of the Truth of our Hearts,
 ‘in which there ought to be *pure & single Love to*
 ‘ward thy Brother. Again he sayes, ‘*Swear-*
 ‘*ing can only be allowed in Charity, where Yea*
 ‘*and Nay have lost Credance*; however, that no
 ‘Judge or other ought in any Case to *compel* any
 ‘Man to *swear* against his Will.

Peter Martyr, who deserves well of the *English*
Protestants, confesseth, ‘That *Christians* ought to
 live

‘live so *Charitably* and *Uprightly*, as not to need an
 ‘Oath, and that they may not be called upon to
 ‘*Swear*. Again, ‘Let us so live that there may be
 ‘no need for us to *Swear* either by *God*, or any other
 ‘Thing *at all*; and this (sayes he) is that same
 ‘*AT ALL*, which Christ spake of.

N. Zegerus upon *Mat. 5. 34.* tells us, ‘That the
 ‘most *Ancient Writers* from thence concluded all
 ‘Oaths forbidden, and that the bare Word of *Chri-*
 ‘*stians* ought to be more *Sacred* and *Firm* then the
 ‘most Religious Oaths of the *Jews*.

CXVI. H. GROTIVS, a great & Learned Man,
 On *Mat. 5.* excludes all Oaths, not only such as are used in com-
 & *De Jur. mon Conversation*; but such as relate to *Trade* or pe-
Bell. ac Pac. cunary Matters; allowing some others for avoiding
P. 2. c. 26. ad Infamy, for preserving a Friend, & for a great Service
 47. to their Country, as not *morally necessary*, and by *Pre-*
cept, but only by *Consequence* and *Remedy*; conclu-
 ding that it is best to live so, as not to need an Oath:
 And so both many of those Oaths imposed upon
 us, are laid aside by him; and also he gives many
 Cautions shewing that it is best not to *Swear at all*,
 if it may possibly be avoided: But in Answer to his
 Interpretation, All Oaths are forbid that are perfor-
 mable to the Lord; Now unles the *vain inconsiderate*,
 Oaths, such as are used in common *Traffique* are only
 those that are to be perform’d to the Lord, *Solemn*
 Oaths, such as the *Law* allow’d, are also prohibited.
 Besides, the *Yea* and *Nay* of a true *Christian* is as capable of
 all those good Services as an Oath, if the Sanctity of his
 Faith

Faith, and Profession be allowed: And if any Prejudices come to a Man's *Friend, Country or Self*, because his *Yea* and *Nay* is rejected, it will never lye at his Door, who offers all Christ permits him, and his Conscience will dispense with; but on the *Defrauder's* Side, especially, when he that in Conscience can't *Swear*, offers as large CAUTION as he that *SWEARS*, and is willing to undergo *Equal Punishment*, in Case of *Untruth*, that the other by Law sustains for *Perjury*. And those that will have it to relate to *Rash*, and not *Judicial Oaths*, quite cross the Text; for Christ *prohibits* not only *vain* and *superfluous Oaths*, as now called, such as were *alwayes unlawful*, even under the *Law*; but such as were allowed in the Times of the *Law*, rendring them also by *Evangelical Verity* under the *Gospel*, *Vain*, *superfluous* and *Unlawful*: For well said *Bp. Sanderson*, 'No Need to forbid by a new Command Things that of themselves were *alwayes unlawful*. Otherwise, we must read Christ's Words thus, *Ye have heard by them of Old Time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths; but I say unto you, Swear not at all, except before a Judge*; as if *Swearing* before a *Judge* under the *Law*, were not an *Oath* performable to the Lord; and such it self the Place most expressly forbids; or thus, *Of Old it was said, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, that is, perform to God thine Oaths in Truth and Righteousness: But I (who say more then was said of Old) say unto you, Swear not at all, but perform thine Oaths to God in Truth and Righteousness*; The Inconherence of which must needs be obvious to every considerate Person; yet it is the only Reading that can be left upon those Interpretations. We say, that what God *dispensed* with under the *Law*, he resolved to *remove* under the *Gospel*, and to wind up Things to a higher Pitch of *Truth & Righteousness*: from *Adultery* in the *Act*, to *Adultery* in the *Thought*; from *Revenge*, to *Sufferance*; from *True Swearing*, to *NO Swearing* at all, where by all Abuse of *Oaths* and *Perjury* come to be removed with

De juram.
Prælect. 5.

with the *Oaths* themselves, by working out of Man's Heart that Fraud and Falshood that brought them in, and implanting *Evangelical Verity* in room thereof, which speaketh the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth to his Neighbour, and makes a like Matter of Conscience to *tell a Lye*, as to *For swear*. And it is known to Almighty God, and we most heartily desire it may be known and belived by you, that we have no other End nor Inducement to this to general Refusal we are found in throughout the Nation.

CXVII. Bp. *USHER* is so tender in this Point, that set aside his *Vindication of the Waldenses*, in his *Sum of Christian-Religion*, he makes it necessary to the taking of an *Oath*, that it be considered,

‘*First*, If the *Party we deal with* (really) doubt of the Thing we *affirm* or *deny*, thereby making *Distrust* the Cause of *Swearing*, and implying, that not *Custom*, but real *Diffidence* should only continue *Swearing*; consequently, not to continue where *Distrust* is done away.

‘*Secondly*, It is to be weighed if the *Party's Doubt* whereof we speak, be *Weighty*, and *Worthy of an Oath*, which we fear, is seldom thought upon: *Custom* prevailing even to *Triffles*, as well as most excessive vain *Swearing* in Common Conversation.

‘*Thirdly*, If the *Question be Weighty*, whether (saith the Bishop) *th. Doubt may be ended with Truly or Verely*; or doubting, it *Verely, Verely*, as Christ did for you, by his Example we ought to forbear an *Oath*: *Mat. 5. 37.* Wherefore should it not, especially among *Christians*.

‘*Fourthly*,

Fourthly, 'Whether there be not yet any other fit Means
'to try out the Matter before we come to an Oath.

This is our Case; and we make it our Sober Request, that it
would please you to consider this Particular; for doubtless, an
Expedient may very easily be found, without bringing us under the
Bondage of an Oath.

CXVIII. *F. TAYLER*, Chaplain in Ordinary to
K. Charles I. and late Bishop of Down and Connor, in his
Book call'd *ENIATTOΣ, A Course of Sermons*, London printed
1673. Serm. *Of Christian Simplicity*, fol. 228. Thus,
'Our blessed Lord would not have his Disciples to Swear at all
'(not in publick Judicature) if the Necessity of the World would
'permit him to be obey'd. If Christians will live according to
'the Religion, the WORD of a Christian were a sufficient In-
'strument to give Testimony, and to make Promises, and to secure
'a Faith; and upon that Supposition, Oaths were useless, and
'therefore forbidden; because there would be no Necessity to in-
'voke God's Name in Promises or Affirmations, if men were
'INDEED Christians; and therefore in that Case would be
'a Taking in vain: But because MA-
'NY are not; and they that are in
'NAME, oftentimes are in nothing
'els, it became necessary that Men should
'Swear in Judgment and in publick
'Courts. But consider who it was that
'invented and made the Necessity of
'Oaths, of Bonds, of Securities,
'& all the Artifices of Human Dis-
'fidence and Dishonesty: These
'Things were indeed found out by Men,
U but

Viz. All their Reverent
Fathers in God, Arch-
Bishops, Bishops, Deans,
and the Judges of the
Land, Justices of the
Peace, and all Officers
term'd Ecclesiastical or
Civil, Judges, Priests
and People NO Christi-
ans, else would they suf-
fer Christ's Doctrine to
be obeyed; who not on-
ly

ly enforce OATHS on Strangers, but having the like Diffidence, One Father in God of Another, one Judge and Justice of another, impose them on their Brethren and Fathers, with Equal Distrust.

‘but the Necessity of these was from him that is the Father of all Lyes; from him that hath made many fair Promises, but never kept any; or if he did, it was to do a bigger MISCHIEF, to flatter the more; For so does the DEVIL.

See *Jews Antiquities*, Chap. 12. Pag. 52. Concerning the Pythagoreans, the Esseni, and concerning the just Man at Athens, which they would not have to swear; And what the Scholiast on *Aristophanes*, Lib. 12. p. 286. saith of *Rhadamanthus*.

CXIX. Lastly, Bp. GAUDEN in his Discourse for Solemn Swearing, sayes thus much against it.

1. ‘That Diffimulations, Frauds, Jealousies, &c. gave Rise to Oaths.

2. ‘That The Ancient Christians and Fathers, that they might not be short of the Esseni, who WOULD NOT TAKE AN OATH, REFUSED TO SWEAR, saying to the Heathen, *Christianus sum*, I am a Christian; to each other, *Yea, yea; Nay, nay;* thereby keeping up the Sanity and Credit of their Profession.

3. ‘That as Christians, truly such, we should possibly need no Swearing; for an Oath is not (sayes he) Moral or Preceptive, but an Expedient or Remedy only against Falseness.

Lastly, ‘That neither a true Christian and good Man need to be Compelled to Swear, in Order to the Awing him into Truth-telling—Nor is ill Mens Swearing of much Credit, with more to that Purpose: What Need then is there of either’s Swearing?

The

The Substance of all which is this; *Oaths* rise with Fraud; Mens growing *False* and *Jealous*, *Swearing* or *Awing* by *Oaths* into True Evidence, became an Expedient; and during this imbecil and imperfect State of Mankind, Almighty God, that hath been ever wont to stoop to Man's Weakness, condescended to yield the *Jews* that Custom, provided that they refrain'd from *Common* and *Idolatrous Oaths*; and when they were called to *Swear*, they did it by the *Name of the True God*, thereby manifesting their Acknowledgment of him; but Christ, who is the Restorer of Breaches, the Builder of waste Places, the Bringer back of the Captivity of his People (where *Oaths* were first wanted and learned) and the Setter up of the Kingdom of God (which stands in Righteousness) redeems into *Truth-speaking* which fulfils the *Law* by taking away the Occasion of an *Oath*; and such as are the true, humble and faithful Followers of this worthy Leader, need no *Oath* to compel them into Truth, to whom Truth is Natural, being freed by it, *Jch. 8. 32.* from *Fraud & Falseness*, and consequently from *Swearing*, which took Occasion by it to enter the World. Now we profess our selves in the Fear of Almighty God to be such as have thus learned Christ Jesus, and for the *Reverence* and *Holy Love* we bear to his Righteous Commandment we can't take an *Oath* in any Case.

Object. 'Tis True, and you say well, *Oaths* only serve till *Truth-speaking* comes, and you say, it is come to you; But how shall we know that?

Ans. We intreat you to try us: No Man can be justly condemn'd before he be guilty; nor reputed guilty in the Sight of men, till discover'd, You will have as easie a Way to catch us at *Lying*, as others at *Forswearing*; and if you find us such, inflict the same Punishment for Our Lye, which is enacted for their Perjury.

Be pleased to consider:

- I. The Rise of OATHS.
- II. The Prohibition of CHRIST.
- III. The Judgment of so many good HEATHENS.
- IV. The Belief & Practice of so many primitive CHRISTIANS, Celebrious FATHERS, Godly MARTYRS, and Learned PROTESTANTS.

V. The *Caution* they use who in any Sense allow of an *Oath*.

VI. That it is matter of *Faith*; and *What is not of Faith, is Sin*: And that we cannot alter our Minds without *Conviction*, unless we should turn *Hypocrites*; And what *Security* can or will you have from our *Oaths*, who must first make us to break the Tye of our own *Conscience* before we can take them? It can't be thought, we should keep with you, when you make us break with our selves.

VII. Consider what *express Scripture* we have for it, and that in the *Judgment* and *Martyrdom* of many good and famous Persons.

VIII. Be pleased to weigh the great PERJURY that is now in our World, and daily *Numerous Oaths* belcht forth by some, to show they dare be bold with *Sacred Things*; by others, to vent *Passion*; by too many (as they impiously think) to grace their *Matter*, whilst others have so great *Doubt* of their own *Credit*, that they *Swear*, to drive, what they say, home; and not a few use it, merely to fill up vacant places, being barren of better *Matter*. We think that instead of taking Advantage against us for *Not Swearing*, in so *Forswearing* an Age, we should rather receive *Incouragement* for speaking *That Truth without an Oath*, which others are *compell'd* to by *Oath*, if yet they speak it. *False speaking* necessitated the Use of *Oaths* (say many) But *Oaths* proving now not the *Remedy*, but the *Disease*, What better *Expedient* can be used then to come back to *Truth-speaking*, which endeth *Oaths* in their first Cause, or Occasion at least: However, that such as are *not Sick* should be oblig'd to take the *Potions of the Sick*, only to keep them Company, That seems *Unreasonable*.

IX. Be pleased to consider the perishing *Difficulties* we meet withal in our *Commerce* in the World, particularly as *Creditors*, *Executors*, *Merchants*, *Ship-Masters*, *Apprentices*, &c. Men making us pay because of our *Tenderness* in this Matter. Oh the OPPRESSION that is exercis'd in *Petty Courts* and *Sessions* up in many *Hundreds* of us, who know not which Way to *Right* our selves, an *Oath* still being required in the Case; the *Refusal* of which for *Conscience sake*, exposing us to great *Losses*, both of *Estate*, *Liberty* and sometimes *Life* by *Tedious* and *Cruel Imprisonments*.

X. But the *Loss* and *Trouble* is not alwayes our own; Our Neighbours frequently become *Sufferers* against our Wills: *First*, In that we can perform no *Office* in common with them, however otherwise

therwiseable to discharge it. Secondly, Nor can we serve them in the Capacity of *Witnesses*, which Qualification goes a great Way towards the *Maintenance of Justice*; and all because our *solemn Word* will not be received instead of an *Oath*: Relieving us here is a double *Benefit*, for our *Neighbours* share with us in it; and it manifestly tends to the *Preservation of Society*. And whatever any may please to think of us, we are as willing and ready to contribute all *Honest Assistance* to the *Maintenance of Justice*, and answering the Ends of *Government*, according to our *Ability* and *Conscience*, as any Sort of Men that live under it.

XI. And Lastly, We intreat you further to consider, that Our CAUTION is as large as the Man that Swears: For though you make a Difference between him that tells an *Untruth*, and he that *Forswears*, in Favour of the former; yet we cheerfully submit our selves to the *Punishment of the Perjured*, if we break our *WORD*; do you but please to take us into *equal Priviledge* with the *Swearer*: If there be any *Dammage*, we conceive it is done to *Us*, who sustain the same *Punishment* for an *Untruth*, which is the only Due of *Perjury*; and if you condescend to yield us the *Kindness* of the one, we offer our Persons to answer the just *Severity* of the other.

We will add here out of *Hoofi's History of the Netherlands*, a *President*, not impertinent to our Purpose, fol. 464, 465. translated out of *Latin* as follows.

CXX. 'In this Assembly of the States (saith *Hoofi*) 'there was something attempted towards the Oppression of the *Menists*, as appears by a certain Letter, 'written from *Dort*, the last of *March*, by the *Ld. Sr. Aldegonde*, to the Minister *Casparius Heidanus*; which 'was thus worded.

'The Cause of the *Menists* hath since receipt of your 'and *Taffin's* Letters yesterday been treated of with the 'most illustrious *Prince*; And verely, I find it more difficult then I had hoped [for ever may and will such Cursed Hopes meet with such Wise Repulses from prudent

dent Rulers] ' For, he had at *Middelburgh* given me great
 ' Hopes, that we should seclude from the Freedom of
 ' *Burgesses*, or at least, not so solemnly receive those that
 ' refused an *Oath*. Now he alledgeth, that such a thing
 ' cannot be concluded without a new Convulsion in the
 ' Churches, because the *States* will never suffer, that
 ' such a Law be made, as they judge no wayes condu-
 ' cing to the Common Good of the Republick. Yea,
 ' he avers, That this was the only Cause formerly, which
 ' brought their *Consistories* so far into the Displeasure of the
 ' *States*, that it differed very little, but they had been
 ' all at once voted down, and laid aside by the Council.
 ' That they [the *Clergy*] were now again about the same
 ' thing, and that in such a season, that no doubt many
 ' would pour in cold Water out of the *Popish* Hodg-podge.
 ' That his settled Judgment was, that this would turn
 ' to great Disadvantage, and breaking down of their
 ' Churches.

' And when I [saith *Aldegonde*] fervently urged,
 ' That we could easily reject those that broak the Band
 ' of all Humane Society, upon Pretence of Civil and
 ' Political Order: and when I added (saith he) how
 ' much *Danger* and *Peril* Church and State were threat-
 ' ned with by such a Conclusion of the Council, in it
 ' self Ungodly, He answered me sharply enough, That
 ' those men's YEA must pass for an *Oath*; and that we must
 ' not urge this thing any further, or we must confess, that the
 ' *Papists* had Reason to Force us to a Religion that was against
 ' our Consciences; and that the *North-Hollanders* would
 ' not at all allow of it.

' In short (saith he) I scarce see any thing we can get
 ' done in this Point, which verely [ye may believe
 him

him upon his Protestation] Is the greater Smart to me,
 'the more I observe that the Minds of many Honest
 'Men, by the pretending of I know not what unseasonable
 'Stumbling Blocks, will be thereby imbitter'd, yea,
 'I could almost say, wounded, to see them less affected
 'to those, that to their uttermost seek to advance the
 'Cause of the Church.

'The *PRINCE* (saith he) partly in the Name of
 'the State, and partly of himself, chid me, as if we
 'were about to set up in our Clergy a *Dominion over the*
 '*Conscience*; and as if they endeavour, by their *Laws*
 'and *Constitutions*, to subject all others to them:
 'And he praised the Saying of a *Monk* that was lately
 'here, who answered to the Objection [of the Persecuting
 'Spirit of the *Romish Church*] '*That our Pot had not*
 '*gone so long to the Fire as theirs, whom we did so much re-*
 '*vile upon that Account* — And that he clearly saw, That
 'before two Ages passed, the Church-Dominion would upon both
 'sides stand on even Ground.

To which *Hoofst* adds, 'By this we may observe,
 'of what Consequence the *Prince* and *States* then held *Liberty*
 'of *Conscience* to be.

And that what we have hitherto said may not be thought a thing
 impracticable, we shall present you with the Judgment and *Edicts*
 of *Forreign Governments*.

Here follow *Two Letters* of the *Grave* of *Nassou* and *Prince*
 of *Orange*, to the *Magistrates* of the City of *Middel-*
burgh, in Behalf of the *Menists* there.

CXXI. A Copy of the First Letter.

FOrasmuch as a Supplication hath been presented unto his Excellency in behalf of certain Inhabitants of this City of Middelburg; complaining thereby, That the Magistrates of the said City had lately caused their Shops to be shut, and consequently prohibited their Trade, which yet the only means which they have to maintain their Families; the said Prohibition proceeding from their not having yet taken the Usual OATH, as others: The said Inhabitants further remonstrating, how that they now, for a certain long Term of Years, have, without taking the said Oath, freely born all Civil Burdens, Contributions and Taxes, equally with other Burgessees and Inhabitants of this said City, without ever having been in any Default: and therefore ought at present still to remain unmolested, seeing they do therein not desire any thing else, then to live in the Liberty of their Consciences, upon which Account this present War against the King of Spain hath been by his Subjects taken up, and all Ceremonies contrary thereunto resisted; in which such Advance is, through the Help of God, made, that the aforesaid Liberty of Conscience is preserved; and therefore it would be an Unequal Thing to Deprive

prive the *Supplicants* thereof, who have helped to acquire the same by bearing Taxes, Contributions, and other Burdens, not without great Peril of their Bodies and Lives ; consonant to which they having presented a Request to the aforesaid Magistrates, but got for Answer, *That they must regulate themselves according to the Policy and Order of the aforesaid City* : Whereby (*saieth the Petition*) the aforesaid Magistrates seem to endeavour by the *Oath*, not only totally to ruin and expel out of these Lands the Petitioners, with their Wives & Children, residing in *Middelburgh*; but consequently innumerable others, in *Holland* and *Zeeland*, who have (according to his Excellency's Proclamations) placed themselves under his Excellency's Protection, by which no man can be any wayes benefited ; but all these Lands received great and considerable Dammage, because thereby the Traffique thereof would be every where greatly diminished : Intreating therefore, and humbly begging his Excellency, that looking upon their Case with Compassion, he would take due Course about it, especially seeing that the aforesaid Petitioners do proffer, that their *YEA* passing for an *Oath*, the Transgressors thereof should be punished as Oath-Breakers.

Therefore, his Excellency having considered the Premises, and having maturely deliberated upon the same, hath, with the previous Advice of the Governour and Council of Zeeland, ordered and appointed, ordereth and appointeth hereby, That the aforesaid Petitioners YEA shall be received by the Magistrates of the aforesaid City instead of an OATH; provided, that the Transgressors thereof shall be punished as Oath-Breakers and Perjured Persons. His Excellency charging and commanding the Magistrates of Middelburgh, and all others whom this may concern, No further to oppress the Petitioners contrary to their Consciences, concerning the Oath; but suffer them to Open their Shops, and Enjoy their Trades, as they formerly have done: all by Provision, and till such time as there shall be, in more Tranquillity of Affairs, with ripe Deliberation, regard being had thereunto, ordained therein, as shall be found convenient.

This done under his Excellency's Name and Seal, in the City of Middelburgh, upon the 26. January, 1577.

Guilliaume de Nassou.

By my Gracious Lord, the Prince, subscribed,
De Baudemont.

CX XII. A Copy of the Second Letter.

*The Prince of Orange, Grave of Nassau,
Lord and Baron of Bueda, Diest, &c.*

Honourable, Honest, Worshipful, Wise, Discreet,
Dear and Singular :

FOrasmuch as certain House-keepers there inhabiting, being, as they say, Menists, have, by way of Complaint divers times signified to us, how that You are daily Molesting them, and Depriving them of the Means of Gaining in Rest & Quietness their Livings for them and their Families; forbidding them to open their Shops, under the Pretence, that they should Refuse to take an Oath in the same Form as other Burgeses; upon which we having taken ripe Deliberation: And forasmuch as the aforesaid People do proffer to bear equally all Burdens with other Citizens, and even in the Case of Arms, which mostly moves them to contribute, do you such Performances at their Charges, as your selves, or they that shall have the Orders shall find in all Reason and Equity fit to be done, and they will bear it :

We

We therefore conceive, that ye do very ill, not to permit them to live in Peace and Quietness, according to the Mind of their Conscience, according to the Act which we, with the Advice of the Governour and Council formerly afforded them, which they say, they have exhibited to you; And yet notwithstanding, we find that you have hitherto refused to give heed unto it, and to our precedent Letters, and so we are constrain'd for this last time to write this, by which we plainly declare unto you, That it concerns not you to trouble your selves in particular with any Man's Conscience, so long as nothing is treated or done that might extend to any Man's Scandal; in which Case we will neither respect nor bear any Man.

And therefore we charge and order you expressly, To desist all further Molestation or Hinderance of the said Menists in their Merchandize or Handicrafts to gain their Livelihood for their Wives and Children; suffering them to open their Shops, and work as they have in times past done; till such time as there shall be otherwise ordered by the Generality (who are thereunto qualified) And therefore take heed that ye do nothing against this, and the Act to them granted, or to further any Fines from them upon that Account; provided,
nothing

nothing be by them attempted, which might tend to the Scandal of any Man : And they shall bear all Civil and Equal Burdens, as other Men. Herewith, &c.

Subscribed by Copy,

De Baudemont.

CXXIII. Also, by the *Treaties of Peace* between the *States General* of the *United Provinces*, and the *Kings of England, Spain, &c.* ann. 1674. there is a special Article therein contained, That ‘ *All their Ship-Masters of Merchant Ships, shall carry along with them a Sea-Brief, according to the Form thereby prescribed.*

In which it is expressly declared, that ‘ *Such Master shall come before the Magistrates, and by his solemn Oath testify, that such Ship, whereof he is Master, doth properly belong unto the Subjects of the said States General; unto which Sea-Brief, under the Seal of the City’s intire Faith and Credit is given.*

And although by the said *Treaties*, the Master was to give his *Oath*, yet the Magistrates in *Holland* do take the *Solemn Affirmation* of such as Cannot Swear instead of an *Oath*, and insert it so accordingly in their *Sea-Briefs*; and then it runs thus, ‘ *These are to certify, &c. That A. B. hath before us Solemnly Affirmed and Declared, that the Ship C. D. whereof he is Master, doth properly belong and appertain to the Subjects of the States General of the United Provinces, &c.*

Which can be sufficiently evidenced, if required.

This.

This was the *Cave*, this the *Condescension* of other Governments, for the Relief of Persons under our Circumstances: And we take Liberty to affirm, That the Trade and Wealth of the *United Provinces*, are owing more to the Ingenuity and Industry of these Indulg'd *Dissenters* than to them of the National Religion, who would have flugg'd and tyranniz'd all into Poverty and Vassallage.

Have Regard to our *Suffering Condition*, we beseech you, and shew your selves both Natural to a Member (be we reputed the meanest) of your own Civil Body, and so far Lovers of him who said, *Swear not at all*, as not to continue us Sufferers for not acting against his Command, at least, our Sense of it, and therein of our own Consciences; But make some *Provision* for us, as well as other Countries have done before you, as in your Wisdom you shall think meet; that all those, who are of the Society of the People called *Quakers*, and known of themselves to be so, shall not be molested for the future upon the Account of Swearing, but their Solemn YEA or NAY shall be taken in lieu thereof, and their Untruth, or Breach of Word, Punishable as Perjury.

— God, we know, that delights in Mercy, and in all Acts of Tenderness to the Sons of Men, will savour so Natural, so Generous and so *Christian* an Enterprize; and the Proposers, Promoters & Effecters of this happy Deliverance from the heavy Clog of Swearing, under which we and our Families have so long groaned, will not, we dare believe, go without their Rewards at the Hands of the Almighty, whom, at what rate soever ye shall deal with us, we do, from the bottom of our Souls, humbly and heartily implore, That it would please him so to dispose your Hearts, as you may best Discharge that High Trust reposed in you, to the Honour of his Great Name, and the Prosperity of this Famous Kingdom, the most certain Foundation of True Felicity to your selves; and which will give, as a good Example to others, so the clearest Reputation to you and your Posterity.

*This perform'd in the Name and for the Service of the
People call'd Quakers*

William Penn, Richard Richardson.

1/28/31/112.02.

A
TREATISE
OF
OATHS,

Containing
Several Weighty Reasons why the Peo-
ple call'd *QUAKERS* refuse to SWEAR:

And those Confirmed by
Numerous Testimonies out of *Gentiles, Jews* and
CHRISTIANS, both *Fathers, Doctors* and *Martyrs*.

Presented to the
King and Great Council of England,

Assembled in
PARLIAMENT.

Mat. 5. 34. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all.*

Jam. 5. 22. *Above all things, my Brethren, Swear not.*

Jer. 32. 10. *Because of Oaths the Land Mourneeth.*

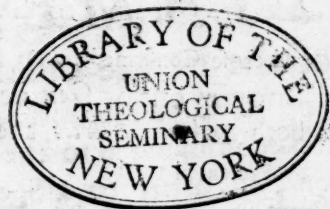
(Wm Penn & Rich. Richardson)

Theognis, He ought to Swear neither this thing nor any thing.

Maimonides, It is a great Good for a Man not to Swear at all.

Chrysostom, It is not lawful to Swear, neither in a just nor unjust
Cause.

Printed Anno 1675.



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(1)

TO THE
King and Great Council
OF
ENGLAND,
Assembled in
PARLIAMENT.
The Case of the People call'd QUAKERS relating to OATHS further Represented; and Recommended to their Consideration, in order to a Speedy and Effectual REDRESS.

THe common Benefit of the Free People of England being undoubtedly both the first and greatest Reason for the Ancient, Just & Necessary Constitution of Parliaments; and being also inform'd that it is your Resolution, to employ this Session to the Redress of Publick Grievances: And since We cannot but repute our
selves

(3)
*selves a Member of this Great Body you
represent, by Birth and English Descent;
and are not only involved in the Common
Calamities of the Kingdom, but in Par-
ticular very cruelly Treated in our Per-
sons and Estates, because we cannot for
pure Conscience take any Oath at all
(though we have again and again tender'd
our solemn Yea or Nay; and are most
willing to sustain the same Penalty in
Case of Lying, that is usually inflicted for
Perjury). To the End we may not be
interpreted to decline the Custom out of
meer Humour or Evasion (though our
frequent & heavy Sufferings by Fines
and tedious Imprisonments, sometimes to
Death it self, should sufficiently Vindicate
us against any such Incharitable Censure)
WE do, with all due Respect, present you
with our Reasons for that Tenderness, and
many Testimonies and Presidents in their
De-*

*Defence; and we entreat you, to express
 that Care of a Member of your own Civil
 Body, which Nature and Christianity
 excite to; We mean, That it would please
 you to consider how deeply we have al-
 ready suffered, in Person and Estate,
 the Inconveniencies we have daily to en-
 counter, and those Injurious not only to
 our selves, but others we commerce with,
 in that both they and we, because of our
 Tenderness in this Matter, are constantly
 at the Mercy of such as will Swear any
 thing to advantage themselves, where
 they are sure that a Contrary Evidence
 shall be by Law esteem'd (however
 True) Invalid; under which Difficulty
 several of us at this Hour fruitlessly la-
 bour: That being sensible of our Calami-
 ty, you may please to endeavour, as for
 others, so for this Grievance, both a Speedy
 and Effectual Redress; otherwise, besides
 ordi-*

ly enforce OATHS on Strangers, but having the like Diffidence, One Father in God of Another, one Judge and Justice of another, impose them on their Brethren and Fathers, with Equal Distrust.

‘but the Necessity of these was from him that is the Father of all Lyes; from him that hath made many fair Promises, but never kept any; or if he did, it was to do a bigger MISCHIEF, to flatter the more; For so does the DEVIL.

See *Jews Antiquities*, Chap. 12 Pag. 52. Concerning the Pythagoreans, the Esseni, and concerning the *Just Man at Athens*, which they would not have to swear. *Pharises*, Lib. 1. 3. and what the Scholiast on Aristotle, p. 286. saith of Rhadamantibus.

CXIX. Lastly, Bp. GAUDEN in his Discourse for Solemn Swearing, sayes thus much against it.

1. ‘That Diffidulations, Frauds, Jealousies, &c. gave Rise to Oaths.
2. ‘That The Ancient Christians and Fathers, that they might not be short of the Esseni, who WOULD NOT TAKE AN OATH, REFUSED TO SWEAR, saying to the Heathen, *Christianus sum*, I am a Christian; to each other, *Yea, yea; Nay, nay;* thereby keeping up the Sanctity and Credit of their Profession.
3. ‘That as Christians, truly such, we should possibly need no Swearing; for an Oath is not (sayes he) Moral or Preceptive, but an Expedient or Remedy only against Falseness.

Lastly, ‘That neither a true Christian and good Man need to be Compelled to Swear, in Order to the Awaking him into Truth-telling—Nor is ill Mens Swearing of much Credit, with more to that Purpose: What Need then is there of either’s Swearing?

The Substance of all which is this; *Oaths* rise with Fraud; Mens growing *False* and *Jealous*, *Swearing* or *Awing* by *Oaths* into True Evidence, became an Expedient; and during this imbecil and imperfect State of Mankind, Almighty God, that hath been ever wont to stoop to Man's Weakness, condescended to yield the *Jews* that Custom, provided that they refrain'd from *Common* and *Idolatrous Oaths*; and when they were called to *Swear*, they did it by the Name of the True God, thereby manifesting their Acknowledgment of him; but Christ, who is the Restorer of Breaches, the Builder of waste Places, the Bringer back of the Captivity of his People (where *Oaths* were first wanted and learned) and the Setter up of the Kingdom of God (which stands in Righteousness) redeems into Truth-speaking which fulfils the Law by taking away the Occasion of an *Oath*; and such as are the true, humble and faithful Followers of this worthy Leader, need no *Oath* to compel them into Truth, to whom Truth is Natural, being freed by it, *Joh. 8. 32.* from *Fraud* & *Falseness*, and consequently from *Swearing*, which took Occasion by it to enter the World. Now we profess our selves in the Fear of Almighty God to be such as have thus learned Christ Jesus, and for the Reverence and Holy Love we bear to his Righteous Commandment we can't take an *Oath* in any Case.

Object. 'Tis True, and you say well, *Oaths* only serve till Truth-speaking comes, and you say, it is come to you; But how shall we know that?

Ans^r. We intreat you to try us: No Man can be justly condemn'd before he be guilty; nor reputed guilty in the Sight of men, till discover'd, You will have as easie a Way to catch us at *Lying*, as others at *Forswearing*; and if you find us such, inflict the same Punishment for Our Lye, which is enacted for their Perjury.

Be pleased to consider:

- I. The Rise of OATHS.
- II. The Prohibition of CHRIST.
- III. The Judgment of so many good HEATHENS.
- IV. The Belief & Practice of so many primitive CHRISTIANS, Celebrious FATHERS, Godly MARTYRS, and Learned PROTESTANTS.

V. The *Caution* they use who in any Sense allow of an *Oath*.

VI. That it is matter of *Faith*; and *What is not of Faith, is Sin*. And that we cannot alter our Minds without *Conviction*, unless we should turn *Hypocrites*; And what *Security* can or will you have from our *Oaths*, who must first make us to break the Tye of our own *Conscience* before we can take them? It can't be thought, we should keep with you, when you make us break with our selves.

VII. Consider what *express Scripture* we have for it, and that in the *Judgment* and *Martyrdom* of many good and famous Persons.

VIII. Be pleased to weigh the great *PERJURY* that is now in our World, and daily *Numerous Oaths* belcht forth by some, to show they dare be bold with *Sacred Things*; by others, to vent *Passion*; by too many (as they impiously think) to grace their *Matter*, whilst others have so great *Doubt* of their own *Credit*, that they *Swear*, to drive, what they say, home; and not a few use it, *merely to fill up vacant places*, being barren of better *Matter*. We think that instead of taking Advantage against us for *Not Swearing*, in so *Forswearing an Age*, we should rather receive *Incouragement* for speaking *That Truth without an Oath*, which others are *compell'd* to by *Oath*, if yet they speak it. *False speaking* necessitated the Use of *Oaths* (say many) But *Oaths* proving now not the *Remedy*, but the *Disease*, What better *Expedient* can be used then to come back to *Truth-speaking*, which endeth *Oaths* in their first Cause, or Occasion at least: However, that such as are *not Sick* should be oblig'd to take the *Potions of the Sick*, only to keep them Company, That seems *Unreasonable*.

IX. Be pleased to consider the perishing *Difficulties* we meet withal in our *Commerce* in the World, particularly as *Creditors*, *Executors*, *Merchants*, *Ship-Masters*, *Apprentices*, &c. Men making us pay because of our *Tenderness* in this Matter. Oh the *OPPRESSION* that is exercised in *Petty Courts* and *Sessions* upon many *Hundreds* of us, who know not which Way to *Right* our selves, an *Oath* still being required in the Case; the *Refusal* of which for *Conscience sake*, exposing us to great *Losses*, both of *Estate*, *Liberty* and sometimes *Life* by *Tedious* and *Cruel Imprisonments*.

X. But the *Loss* and *Trouble* is not alwayes our own; Our Neighbours frequently become *Sufferers* against our Wills: *First*, In that we can perform no *Office* in common with them, however otherwise

therwiseable to discharge it. *Secondly*, Nor can we serve them in the Capacity of *Witnesses*, which Qualification goes a great Way towards the *Maintenance of Justice*; and all because our *solemn Word* will not be received instead of an *Oath*: Relieving us here is a double *Benefit*, for our *Neighbours* share with us in it; and it manifestly tends to the *Preservation of Society*. And whatever any may please to think of us, we are as willing and ready to contribute all *Honest Assistance* to the *Maintenance of Justice*, and answering the Ends of *Government*, according to our *Ability* and *Conscience*, as any Sort of Men that live under it.

XI. And *Lastly*, We intreat you further to consider, that *Our CAUTION* is as large as the Man that *Swears*: For though you make a Difference between him that tells an *Untruth*, and he that *Forswears*, in Favour of the former; yet we cheerfully submit our selves to the *Punishment of the Perjured*, if we break our *WORD*; do you but please to take us into *equal Privilege* with the *Swearer*: If there be any *Damage*, we conceive it is done to *Us*, who sustain the same *Punishment* for an *Untruth*, which is the only *Due of Perjury*; and if you condescend to yield us the *Kindness* of the one, we offer our Persons to answer the just *Severity* of the other.

We will add here out of *Hoof's History of the Netherlands*, a *President*, not impertinent to our Purpose, fol. 464, 465. translated out of *Latin* as follows.

CXX. 'In this Assembly of the States (saith *Hoof*) 'there was something attempted towards the Oppression of the *Menists*, as appears by a certain Letter, 'written from *Dort*, the last of *March*, by the *Ld. St. Aldegonde*, to the Minister *Casparius Heidanus*; which 'was thus worded.

'The Cause of the *Menists* hath since receipt of your 'and *Taffin's* Letters yesterday been treated of with the 'most illustrious *Prince*; And verely, I find it more difficult then I had hoped [for ever may and will such Cursed Hopes meet with such Wise Repulses from prudent

dent Rulers] 'For, he had at *Middelburgh* given me great
 'Hopes, that we should seclude from the Freedom of
 ' *Burgeses*, or at least, not so solemnly receive those that
 ' refused an *Oath*. Now he alledgeth, that such a thing
 ' cannot be concluded without a new Convulsion in the
 ' Churches, because the *States* will never suffer, that
 ' such a Law be made, as they judge no wayes condu-
 ' cing to the Common Good of the Republick. Yea,
 ' he avers, That this was the only Cause formerly, which
 ' brought their *Consistories* so far into the Displeasure of the
 ' States, that it differed very little, but they had been
 ' all at once voted down, and laid aside by the Council.
 ' That they [the *Clergy*] were now again about the same
 ' thing, and that in such a season, that no doubt many
 ' would pour in cold Water out of the *Papish* Hodg-podge.
 ' That his settled Judgment was, that this would turn
 ' to great Disadvantage, and breaking down of their
 ' Churches.

' And when I [saith *Aldegonde*] fervently urged,
 ' That we could easily reject those that broak the Band
 ' of all Humane Society, upon Pretence of Civil and
 ' Political Order: and when I added (saith he) how
 ' much *Danger* and *Peril* Church and State were threat-
 ' ned with by such a Conclusion of the Council, in it
 ' self Ungodly, He answered me sharply enough, That
 ' those men's YEA must pass for an *Oath*; and that we must
 ' not urge this thing any further, or we must confess, that the
 ' *Papists* had Reason to Force us to a Religion that was against
 ' our Consciences; and that the *North-Hollanders* would
 ' not at all allow of it.

' In short (saith he) I scarce see any thing we can get
 ' done in this Point, which verely [ye may believe
 him

him upon his Protestation] Is the greater Smart to me,
 'the more I observe that the Minds of many Honest
 'Men, by the pretending of I know not what unseasonable
 'Stumbling Blocks, will be thereby imbitter'd, yea,
 'I could almost say, wounded, to see them less affected
 'to those, that to their uttermost seek to advance the
 'Cause of the Church.

'The PRINCE (saith he) partly in the Name of
 'the State, and partly of himself, chid me, as if we
 'were about to set up in our Clergy a *Dominion over the*
 '*Conscience*; and as if they endeavour, by their *Laws*
 'and *Constitutions*, to subject all others to them:
 'And he praised the Saying of a *Monk* that was lately
 'here, who answered to the Objection [of the Persecuting
 'Spirit of the *Romish Church*] 'That our Pot had not
 'gone so long to the Fire as theirs, whom we did so much re-
 'vile; on that Account. — And that he clearly saw, That
 'before two Ages passed, the Church-Dominion would upon both
 'sides stand on even Ground.

To which Hooft adds, 'By this we may observe,
 'of what Consequence the Prince and States then held Li-
 'berty of Conscience to be.

And that what we have hitherto said may not be thought a thing
 impracticable, we shall present you with the Judgment and Edicts
 of *Forreign Governments*.

Here follow Two Letters of the *Grave* of Nassou and Prince
 of Orange, to the Magistrates of the City of *Middel-*
burgh, in Behalf of the *Menists* there.

CXXI. A Copy of the First Letter.

F*Orasmuch as a Supplication hath been presented unto his Excellency in behalf of certain Inhabitants of this City of Middelburg; complaining thereby, That the Magistrates of the said City had lately caused their Shops to be shut, and consequently prohibited their Trade, which yet the only means which they have to maintain their Families; the said Prohibition proceeding from their not having yet taken the Usual OATH, as others: The said Inhabitants further remonstrating, how that they now, for a certain long Term of Years, have, without taking the said Oath, freely born all Civil Burdens, Contributions and Taxes, equally with other Burgeesses and Inhabitants of this said City, without ever having been in any Default: and therefore ought at present still to remain unmolested, seeing they do therein not desire any thing else, then to live in the Liberty of their Consciences, upon which Account this present War against the King of Spain hath been by his Subjects taken up, and all Ceremonies contrary thereunto resisted; in which such Advance is, through the Help of God, made, that the aforesaid Liberty of Conscience is preserved; and therefore it would be an Unequal Thing to De-*
 prive

prive the *Supplicants* thereof, who have hel'ped to acquire the same by bearing Taxes, Contributions, and other Burdens, not without great Peril of their Bodies and Lives; consonant to which they having presented a Request to the aforesaid Magistrates, but got for Answer, *That they must regulate themselves according to the Policy and Order of the aforesaid City*: Whereby (*saieth the Petition*) the aforesaid Magistrates seem to endeavour by the *Oath*, not only totally to ruin and expel out of these Lands the Petitioners, with their Wives & Children, residing in *Middelburgh*; but consequently innumerable others, in *Holland* and *Zeeland*, who have (according to his Excellency's Proclamations) placed themselves under his Excellency's Protection, by which no man can be any wayes benefited; but all these Lands received great and considerable Dammage, because thereby the Traffique thereof would be every where greatly diminished: Intreating therefore, and humbly begging his Excellency, that looking upon their *Case* with Compassion, he would take due Course about it, especially seeing that the aforesaid Petitioners do proffer, that their *YEA* passing for an *Oath*, the Transgressors thereof should be punished as Oath-Breakers.

Therefore, his Excellency having considered the Premises, and having maturely deliberated upon the same, hath, with the previous Advice of the Governour and Council of Zeeland, ordered and appointed, ordereth and appointeth hereby, That the aforesaid Petitioners *YEA* shall be received by the Magistrates of the aforesaid City instead of an *OATH*; provided, that the Transgressors thereof shall be punished as Oath-Breakers and Perjured Persons. His Excellency charging and commanding the Magistrates of Middelburgh, and all others whom this may concern, No further to oppress the Petitioners contrary to their Consciences, concerning the Oath; but suffer them to Open their Shops, and Enjoy their Trades, as they formerly have done: all by Provision, and till such time as there shall be, in more Tranquillity of Affairs, with ripe Deliberation, regard being had thereunto, ordained therein, as shall be found convenient.

This done under his Excellency's Name and Seal, in the City of Middelburgh, upon the 16. January, 1577.
Guilliaume de Nassou.

By my Gracious Lord, the Prince, subscribed,
De Baudemont.

CXXII. A Copy of the Second Letter.

*The Prince of Orange, Grave of Nassau,
Lord and Baron of Bueda, Diest, &c.*

Honourable, Honest, Worshipful, Wise, Discreet,
Dear and Singular :

FOrasmuch as certain House-keepers there inhabiting, being, as they say, Menists, have, by way of Complaint divers times signified to us, how that You are daily Molesting them, and Depriving them of the Means of Gaining in Rest & Quietness their Livings for them and their Families; forbidding them to open their Shops, under the Pretence, that they should Refuse to take an Oath in the same Form as other Burgeses; upon which we having taken ripe Deliberation: And forasmuch as the aforesaid People do proffer to bear equally all Burdens with other Citizens, and even in the Case of Arms, which mostly moves them to contribute, do you such Performances at their Charges, as your selves, or they that shall have the Orders shall find in all Reason and Equity fit to be done; and they will bear it :

We

We therefore conceive, that ye do very ill, not to permit them to live in Peace and Quietness, according to the Mind of their Conscience, according to the Act which we, with the Advice of the Governour and Council formerly afforded them, which they say, they have exhibited to you; And yet notwithstanding, we find that you have hitherto refused to give heed unto it, and to our precedent Letters, and so we are constrain'd for this last time to write this, by which we plainly declare unto you, That it concerns not you to trouble your selves in particular with any Man's Conscience, so long as nothing is treated or done that might extend to any Man's Scandal; in which Case we will neither respect nor bear any Man.

And therefore we charge and order you expressly, To desist all further Molestation or Hinderance of the said Menists in their Merchandize or Handicrafts to gain their Livelihood for their Wives and Children; suffering them to open their Shops, and work as they have in times past done; till such time as there shall be otherwise ordered by the Generality (who are thereunto qualified) And therefore take heed that ye do nothing against this, and the Act to them granted, or to further any Fines from them upon that Account; provided,
nothing

nothing be by them attempted, which might tend to the Scandal of any Man : And they shall bear all Civil and Equal Burdens, as other Men. Herewith, &c.

Subscribed by Copy,

De Baudemont.

CXXIII. Also, by the *Treaties of Peace* between the *States General* of the *United Provinces*, and the *Kings of England, Spain, &c.* ann. 1674. there is a special Article therein contained, That *All their Ship-Masters of Merchant Ships, shall carry along with them a Sea-Brief, according to the Form thereby prescribed.*

In which it is expressly declared, that *Such Master shall come before the Magistrates, and by his solemn Oath testify, that such Ship, whereof he is Master, doth properly belong unto the Subjects of the said States General; unto which Sea-Brief, under the Seal of the City's intire Faith and Credit is given.*

And although by the said *Treaties*, the Master was to give his *Oath*, yet the *Magistrates in Holland* do take the *Solemn Affirmation* of such as Cannot Swear instead of an *Oath*, and insert it so accordingly in their *Sea-Briefs*; and then it runs thus, *These are to certify, &c. That A. B. hath before us Solemnly Affirmed and Declared, that the Ship C. D. whereof he is Master, doth properly belong and appertain to the Subjects of the States General of the United Provinces, &c.*

Which can be sufficiently evidenced, if required.

This

This was the *Care*, this the *Condescension* of other Governments, for the Relief of Persons under our Circumstances: And we take Liberty to affirm, That the Trade and Wealth of the *United Provinces*, are owing more to the Ingenuity and Industry of those Indulg'd *Dissenters* than to them of the National Religion, who would have flugg'd and tyranniz'd all into Poverty and Vassallage.

Have Regard to our *Suffering Condition*, we beseech you, and shew your selves both Natural to a Member (be we reputed the meanest) of your own Civil Body, and so far Lovers of him who said, *Swear not at all*, as not to continue us Sufferers for not acting against his Command, at least, our Sense of it, and therein of our own Consciences; But make some *Provision* for us, as well as other Countries have done before you, as in your Wisdom you shall think meet; that all those, who are of the Society of the People called *Quakers*, and known of themselves to be so, shall not be molest'd for the future upon the Account of *Swearing*, but their Solemn YEA or NAY shall be taken in lieu thereof, and their Untruth, or Breach of Word, Punishable as Perjury.

God, we know, that delights in Mercy, and in all Acts of Tenderness to the Sons of Men, will favour so Natural, so Generous and so *Christian* an Enterprize; and the Proposers, Promoters & Effecters of this happy Deliverance from the heavy Clog of *Swearing*, under which we and our Families have so long groaned, will not, we dare believe, go without their Rewards at the Hands of the Almighty, whom, at what rate soever ye shall deal with us, we do, from the bottom of our Souls, humbly and heartily implore, That it would please him so to dispose your Hearts, as you may best Discharge that High Trust reposed in you, to the Honour of his Great Name, and the Prosperity of this Famous Kingdom, the most certain Foundation of True Felicity to your selves; and which will give, as a good Example to others, so the clearest Reputation to you and your Posterity.

*This perform'd in the Name and for the Service of the
People call'd Quakers*

William Penn, Richard Richardson.

ERRATA.

PAge 10. Line 29. read *vanish*: line 34. read *Brugensis*:
p. 11. Margent read 36, 37. page 12. line 16. read *Demo-*
nicus: page 33. l. 3. r. *are made*: pag. 40. l. 2. read *Confessors*:
line 19. dele *which was*: p. 46. l. 15. r. *Obedience*: p. 66. l. 30.
read *here let, &c.* p. 69. l. 24. for *if* read *that*: p. 77. l. 22.
dele *not*: p. 78. l. 6. r. *unperfected work*: Margent read James
on the Fathers: p. 94. Margent for *is* read *as*: p. 97. l. 12. for
declin'd read *disclaim'd*: l. 19. r. *State*: lin. 32. r. *least, were*:
p. 98. l. 16. read *imbrace it*: pag. 99. Marg. read *Gennadius*:
p. 101. l. 10. r. *August, on James 5.* p. 103. l. 28. read *if it had*:
p. 112. l. 6. r. *God and*: pag. 113. l. 28. r. *Paschatius*: p. 114.
Orbo and *Jansenius*, misplaced as to Order of Time, and some
School men and Doctors following, by Haste or Mistake: page
p. 121. Marg. r. *Bar.* p. 122. l. 8. for *was* read *were*: p. 128.
l. 15. blot out *Jury and*: p. 132. l. 25. for *them* read *then*: p. 147.
l. 11. read *accidental*: p. 152. l. 28. read *or doubting*: p. 153.
l. 20. read *taking it*: p. 160. l. 6. read *is yet*.

